

A  
COMPASSIONATE ADDRESS  
TO THE  
CHRISTIAN WORLD:  
DIVIDED INTO  
SIX SECTIONS.

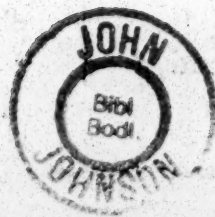
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| rived from the Lord's      | VI. An affectionate Para- |
| Prayer.                    | phrase on these Words,    |
| IV. Self-Examination       | " Why will ye die ?"      |

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L O N D O N :

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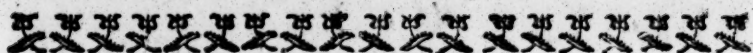
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A COMPASSIONATE

# A D D R E S S

TO THE

*Christian World.*

**D**EAR immortal Souls ! will you permit a Friend of yours to speak to you a little about your highest and everlasting Concerns ? It may be, no body has spoken to you about them a great while ; and I fear you will not mind them, without being earnestly and frequently spoken to : And is it not a pity, and is it not sad, that you should sit still and neglect a great Salvation and glorious Eternity ? Eternity did I say ? Oh ! who can mention Eternity without Admiration, and Fear, and Trembling ? Ah ! dear Souls, is it not ten thousand Pities that, for Want of Knowledge, and Wisdom, and Care, you should lose the Time of Life, and lose a Day of Grace, and plunge yourselves into eternal Destruction ! Oh ! who can bear the Thought of it ? who can chuse but sigh and weep, to think, that Thousands, and Thousands, who now live merry and jocund in a careless World, will ere long be turned into Hell with all them that forget God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ ! O that mine Eyes were Fountains of Waters, to run down Day and Night for the Multitude of ignorant, profane, ungodly Souls, that dwell in our happy Land ! O the Crowds of them that are every where to be found ! How are our Cities, Countries, and Families, filled with loose, wanton, hardened Sinners, that will not hear, and will not learn, the Things that belong to their endless Peace ! How many Fami-

lies live without Religion, and without the Word or Worship of God, and mind Nothing but the World, and Vanity, and Sin, from one Week's End to the other? What Numbers are there of wicked Souls, that live in Rioting and Drunkenness, in Chambering and Wantonness, in Hatred, and Strife, and Envy, in Cursing, and Swearing, and Uncleaness, and never consider what the dreadful End of all this Sin will be! Oh! how many Thousands are there that live without conscientiously hearing and reading the Word and Will of God, without serious Prayer to God, without solemn Thoughts whether there be a God to be worshipped or not! or whether there be a Mediator between God and Man, or not, or what the Mediator is, or where he is, or what he is doing! Ah! poor perishing Mortals! what will become of you? where will you in a little Time appear, if this Course hold? Oh, give a Friend, yet a Stranger, Leave to bemoan and bewail your woeful Condition! O sad Day! that brought you into the World, if in such a Condition you should go out of it! Woe to you that ever you were born, if you put not on Wisdom, Repentance and Holiness, before you die! Oh, I beseech you, open your Eyes and Ears! Hear the Word and Truth of God, and see the Things that he hath revealed! Behold the Love and Compassion of the blessed God! Behold the Mercies and Grace of the Son of God! Behold the Glories of Heaven and the Sorrows of Hell! Behold the endless Life and endless Death that God hath set before you! O, the Stupidity and Deadness of worldly sensual Souls! O, how grieved and pained am I for you! Grieved, to think of the Joys that you forfeit and scorn! pained to think of the hellish Anguish and Woes that you are running into! And how much more grieved and pained should I be, had I more love to you, and a more clear and lively Belief of those Reports that are in the Word of God! I should then more restlessly cry out,

O! my Bowels! my Bowels! O, how do they yearn over you! how are they disturbed and distressed for you, my Brethren! And will ye not pity yourselves? Have you no Concern for your own Welfare, or for the Deliverance of yourselves from eternal Wrath and Ruin? Alas! would you have God to save you against your Wills? or bring you to that Heaven that you will not like, or love, or seek? O, that I could help you to see your Case! and that I could do Something to pull you as Brands out of the Fire. O, how does your Destruction hasten! and, though you sleep and dream away your Life and Time, your Damnation slumbers not. O, what will you do, when God shall say of you, It is a People of no Understanding, they will not understand the Things that belong to their own Peace and Salvation? and therefore he that made them will not have Mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no Favour! *I/a. xxvii. 11.*

Ah! you invaluable Souls, do you consider this? who will save you, or can save you, if he that made you will not? Will any one shew you Favour if he that formed you will not do it? Whose Powers are greater than his? and whose Goodness and Mercy are greater than his? whose Bowels of Compassion are more tender than his? And will the Time come, when he will shew you no Mercy, and no Favour? O dreadful! what will you do when the great Day of his Wrath is come? where will you hide in the Day of his severest Indignation? How can ye bear that Wrath that breaketh the Mountains in Pieces, and burns down to the lowest Hell!

Ah! poor sinning Mortals, How shall I bespeak ye? how shall I pour out my Love to you, my Concern for you, and my Lamentations over you? O, that you were wise! wise for Eternity, and for Salvation! O come, sit down, and let us reason together! What are ye doing? and what have ye been doing since

you were born? what sort of Heart and Life have you? What Spirit are you of? whither are you going? what will be the End of these Things? what Sort of World do you think to appear in next? where will your abode be for ever and ever? Ah! poor Wretches! do you think to eat and drink away the Time of Life, to sleep and trifle away the fairest Seasons that God lends you, and then conclude, that all will be well, and God and Heaven will be yours at last! O! desperate Delusion! what Sin or Lust, what Villain or Devil, put it into your Minds? Never believe it, that, without Faith, and Repentance, and Holiness, you shall ever see God, or enjoy the Company of the blessed. O, that you would be reconciled to Wisdom! to that Wisdom that the Word of God will teach you! O, that you would be reconciled to true Seriousness and Godliness! Rouse up your Reason, and Sense, and Judgment! throw away the foolish Conceits and Wicked Presumptions of this World! apply your Minds to Something good, and heavenly, and divine! Oh! for your Soul's Sake, for the Sake of your eternal Welfare and Happiness, let me beg you to think a little, and ponder on such Things as these!

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### S E C T. I. *Serious Considerations.*

1. *B*ethink ye what you are. What! know ye not your own selves! Are you so intent upon Things without, that ye can never look within, nor consider your own Beings? Are ye not curious excellent Creatures? do you not see a great Variety of Creatures lower than you, such as seem to be made on Purpose for you, and for your Use and Service? what else are the Birds of the Air, the Beasts of the Field, and the Fish of the Sea and the Rivers? Are you not much better than they? furnished with greater Excellencies and Powers? and who made you differ?  
who



who gave you more Knowledge, and Judgment, and Conscience? who put the Sheep, and Oxen, and other Cattle, in Subjection to you? Was it not some great Creator and Disposer of all Things? was it not some great Lord that is good to Man, and prepared him a well-furnished World to dwell in? Who made these curious Bodies and excellent Souls? these Bodies of such good Shape, and of so many Parts and Vessels? who made this Head and Brain, that thus governs the Body, and guides the Motions of it? who made the Stomach to receive the Food, and digest it, to nourish the whole Body? who made the Lungs to breathe and blow, and the Heart to receive the Blood, and pour it out again into all the Members and the Limbs? O! how wonderfully are you made! Who formed this Soul, that gives Life and Motion to the Body? that knows, and judges, and remembers? that is capable of noble Services, and of great Joys and Miseries? O! foolish unthankful Mankind, that so forgets itself, its Original, and Creator! Alas! how stupid and sleepy have you been all this While! how have ye lost your Thoughts, and Minds, and Souls, amidst the Cares and Noise of the World! and how dead and lost have ye been to your Maker, and to all the Love and Service that you owe him!

2. *Ob! consider who God is!* How high, and great, and glorious, he is, that made you, and ordained all these Things! He is indeed the high and lofty One that inhabits Eternity! So great and vast is he, that the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him! So bright and glorious is he, that the purest brightest Angels cover their Faces before him! O! look up to the Heavens, and consider the Wisdom and Power that shine there! what wonderful Wisdom, and Power, was that that made this Firmament and Sky that hang over our Heads, that made this great warming Sun that shines by Day! that made all these Thousands of Stars that look down upon us at Night! O! the Glories of God!

Look



Look round about you upon the Earth, and see the Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, that dwell there! What Riches and Stores are there! Grass and Herbs for the Cattle! Beasts, Birds, and Cattle, for Men! Seas and Rivers to Water the Earth! O, that Men would praise the Lord for his Goodness, and for his wonderful Works to the Children of Men! O, how great and good is that God that thus made and ordered all these Things! How great is his Goodness, and how great is his Beauty, and how great are his Holiness and his Power! and then how great are his Love and Favour, and also how great are his Justice, and Wrath, and Indignation! O, who would not fear and glorify him! O, how sad it is, that your Hearts are turned away from God? that ye have no more Delight in him, or Desire after him! Oh! how sad it is, that you should live so strange to that God, who only can make this World a Comfort to you, and who alone can make you eternally happy!

O! *think what the Law of God is!* The Rule that he hath given you to act and live by! Has God made you fit to guide and govern yourselves? And do you think he has given no Laws, to command, to direct, you? Does he justly expect Honour and Worship from you? and has he not taught you how to worship him? Does your Conscience never accuse you for having broken the Law of God? Do not you find the Laws and Commands of God in your Bible? are not the chief of them summed up in ten Heads, or ten Commandments? and summed up so, that you may the more easily remember them, and think upon them? Yet when did you learn, or study, the Law of God? when did you think of the Things that are commanded or forbidden there? when did you find that God's Law is exceeding broad? that it reaches the Mind, the Thoughts, and Conscience, and judges the Secrets of the Heart? Alas, how little have ye loved your Duty and Obedience to God! Do you think  
that

God has forgotten his Laws as much as you have ? and that he will never call you to an Account for your Ignorance, Stubborness, and Disobedience to them ? Oh ! consider, that the Judge of all the Earth will maintain his Law, and will do right !

4. *Consider what Sin is.* It is your Unsuitableness and Contradiction to the Law of God ; your Disagreement and Disobedience to God's Good, and Holy, and Spiritual, Law ; and, if Treason and Rebellion against an earthly King deserve Death, what must be the Wages of Treason and Rebellion against a Holy God ? What ! will you bid Defence to the Majesty of Heaven ? will you scorn his Wisdom, and Goodness, and Power ? What ! will you trample upon his Mercy, and Patience, and Love ! will you dare his Vengeance, and provoke him to his Face ! O, poor Souls ! think what ye are doing : Do ye think God will not hate Sin, and that he will not be revenged on all the Workers of Iniquity ? O ! how much Evil, and Guilt, there is in one Sin ! And O ! how much more in a whole Life of Sin ! And how much more if you live and die in Sin without Repentance ! O dreadful ! what, will you go out of the World, and go to the Bar of God, and tell him, that you did well to sin against him, and that you never heartily repented of sinning against him ?

5. *Consider what Conscience is.* It will make you, some Time or other, consider : It will not always be choked and silenced, Have you no Conscience ? would you have the World to know you have none ? How fit are you then to be turned out of the World ! Have you no inward Shame for any Thing you say or do ? Can you lie without Conscience ? Have you no Fear of God, no Reflection on yourselves, no Regard to the Law of God ? Can you contentedly murder all that stand in your Way, or be unclean, or steal, or forswear, if you thought you should not be discovered ! Oh what Hearts have you ! how unfit to  
live

live among Mankind ! Does Conscience never accuse you ? Do ye never tremble at the Voice of God, in Thunders, Lightning, Earthquakes, Storms, Famines, and Plagues ? Oh. what a scared Conscience have you ! if you have no Conscience, how much worse are you than the Brutes that have none ! and that because you are likely to do much worse Mischief ! If you have a Conscience, what is the Language and Meaning of it ? Does it not tell you, that there is a holy and terrible God ? that you have offended him, and want to be reconciled, and to be at Peace with God ! does it not tell you that you have Souls to be saved, and Work to be done for Eternity ? does it not tell you that Death is coming, and you are unready, and know not what will become of you for ever ! O, for more Conscience in the World ! Sad, that Men, that must die and go to Judgment, have lost their Mind and their Conscience ! Did you never feel the Pains and Pangs of Conscience ? if you never did, O ! consider how enraged and pained it would be, if God should open Conscience more, and set your Sins in Order before your Eyes, and make you feel the Weight of them ! O what a pained, troubled, restless, Conscience would you then have ! It would give you no Rest Day nor Night ; it will be a constant Torture to you, and as a Worm that never dies ! Oh ! stand in Awe of your Conscience, see that it be reconciled to God, and purged from dead Works, that you may comfortably serve the living God !

6. *See what a sinful, woeful, World you live in !* If you did but know the Law of God, you would see it is a sinful World, continually breaking God's Laws. O, how little of the Fear and Love of God dwell there ! O, how little Aim and Design for God are there to be found ! but Sin and Ungodliness every where reign. Can we wonder then, that God is angry with such a World as this, and that he sends Punishments, Woes, and Plagues ? We find some complain of Poverty and Want, some of Sickness and Pain,

Pain, others of Shame and Reproaches: Some are wronged and oppressed! almost all have their Crosses, Disappointments, and Vexations, in one Kind or other; and Death at last infallibly comes, and cuts down all. And should we be fond of such a World as this! a failing, withering, World! a vain, vexatious, dying, World! Ah, poor Mortals! will ye not seek a better World than this? will ye sell your Souls for this? What will it profit you to gain such a World as this, and then lose your own Souls, and perish for ever? O! what Need have you to be saved from this present evil World, and set your Hearts, and Hopes, and Expectations, upon a better!

7. *Consider what Religion is.* The Way of serving and pleasing God. Consider what the Christian Religion is: That Way of serving and pleasing God, which is established in and by Jesus Christ, and which is taught to the World by him, and is contained in the New Testament. Do you take Care to learn your Religion from thence? or have you no Religion? If you have none, are you not Hypocrites? for, do you not profess some Religion or other? If you have no Religion, sure you have no Conscience; and if no Conscience, sure no Reason, nor Judgment, but live like silly Beasts. If you have Religion, where is it? whence do you learn it? from the Customs and Commandments of Men? from your Parents and Education? Alas! are Customs always good? is Education always agreeable to the Word of Christ? Alas! do you pretend to be Christians, and yet not know what Christianity is, and what it means? Are ye Strangers to the Religion you pretend to be of, and by which you hope to be saved? Oh! what Ignorance is here! Do you think that a Religion you do not understand will do you any Good? or that it is enough to have the Name, and make a Noise about Religion, when you have none of the Power and Practice? O! how easily do poor

Sinners



Sinners delude their own Souls, and cheat them into eternal Darkneſs!

8. *Bethink yourselves who the Lord Jesus Christ is?* How oft do you ſpeak of him, and yet not know him nor think of him? What! know ye not Chriſt? is he the Head and Author of your Religion, and yet not know him? Are ye called by his Name, called Chriſtians! and yet not know who Jeſus Chriſt is? What do you think of him? is he God, or Man, or both? what are his Excellencies? or has he none in your Eyes? what do you think of his Perſon, of his Office, Work, and Deſign! what do you think of his putting on our Nature, and coming into our World? what do you know of his Life and Death, of his Miracles, and Righteouſneſs, and Spirit? what do you know of his dying for our Sins, and for our Redemption? of his riſing from the Dead, and going up into Heaven, and ſending down his Holy Spirit to convert and ſanctify the World unto himſelf? what do ye know of his reigning and interceding in Heaven, and of his deſiring to come again to judge the whole World? O! fooliſh, ungrateful, Chriſtians, that will not know Jeſus Chriſt, their Lord and Maſter! O! blind Neglecters of your own Souls, that will not know and remember him that came to redeem and ſave you! O! how will you look him in the Face when he comes again!

9. *Conſider what the Bible is.* The Book that God has ſent you, to teach you the Way to Heaven, and Happineſs, and himſelf: The Book that is to make you good and wiſe; yea, wiſe for Salvation: The Book that contains the Law of God and Goſpel of Chriſt: The Law of God, and what he commands you, as your Duty, and Obedience, and Thankfulneſs to him: The Goſpel of Chriſt, and the Way in which you are to be pardoned, and ſaved, and accepted with God. There you are told what God has done in the Creation, Preſervation, Redemption, and  
Government



Government of the World: There you are told how God dealt with Man when he had made him good and happy: There you are told what God has done in sending his Son for the Redemption of the World; and what the Son of God has done to redeem and recover us to God: There you learn how holy Men have walked with God, and have been loved and blessed by him; and how evil Men have offended him, and have been cursed and punished by him. There you are taught how to believe, and repent, and obey, and overcome the World, and be eternally happy and blessed. O blessed Book, how it is slighted and despised! O wicked World, that will not value, and study, and learn, the Book of God, the Word of Truth, and Word of Salvation! Oh! the Patience of God! that so bears with the World, that disregards and forsakes his Law and Covenant, his Will and Grace, discovered to perishing Mankind!

10. *Consider what Conversion, Repentance, and Regeneration, are.* It may be, you often hear the Names, but little know the Things. Do ye know what it is to be converted unto God? Do ye know what that Repentance is that sets your Heart against Sin, and sets it towards God? Do you know what it is to be new-born, or born from above? or to have a Heart and Mind renewed by the Spirit of God? Know ye not that you have Need that a great Change should be made upon your Hearts and Consciences, before you can be fit to enter into Heaven? See you not, that you must be mightily altered in Temper and Spirit, before you can be so holy as some others are? and before you can love God and Christ with all your Mind, and Might, and Strength. Do you not perceive how vain and foolish, how carnal, and worldly, and corrupt, you are? Do you not see that you have Need to be new Creatures, to have new Hearts, new Spirits, new Affections, that you may be such as the Word of God requires, and such as may be prepared

for Death, and appearing before God! Oh, how long will you continue in your Sins? in the Love and Practice of Sin? How long will ye live Enemies and Strangers to God, without Conversion, or real turning to the living God? O turn ye, turn ye! why will ye die, O House of *Israel*! you that live in a Land and Country of Light and of the Gospel!

11. *Consider what Ministers are, and what they are for.* Are they not to be Ambassadors for God, and to intreat you to return and be reconciled to God? Are they not ordained and appointed to teach you the Way to God, and Life, and Heaven? And will you not hear them? will you not learn and receive from them the Preaching and Instruction, that is for your Good, and the Peace of your Souls?

12. *Bethink ye what Baptism is.* Do you live in a Christian Land? and have you been baptized? and know ye not what Baptism is? Know ye not that ye were signed and sealed with Water? signed for God's Servants, and sealed in Covenant with him? was not Water applied to you, to tell you that now you must be pure and clean, purged from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God? You were baptized into the Name of the Father, to oblige you to love the Father, and to be faithful in all Obedience to him. You were baptized in the Name of the Son, to oblige you to choose the Son for your Redeemer and Saviour, and to be Followers of him to Death. You were baptized into the Name of the Holy Ghost, to oblige you to accept the Holy Ghost for your Guide and Sanctifier, and to give up yourselves to his sanctifying Operation. And have you forgotten and neglected all this? O perverse Souls! will Nothing tie you to God? will no Bonds be strong enough to secure you to him? Oh! the Falshood and Treachery of the baptized World! O how sad it is that so many Thousands that have been baptized to God and Christ, should be Slaves to Sin,  
and

and led captive by the Devil ! and that baptized ones, those that have been given up to the Father, and to the blessed Son, and to the Holy Spirit, should at last be found among the Devils, and doomed to their Flames and Destruction !

13. *O think what Death is !* Think on it, for it is coming apace ; it is well if it does not come and seize you, before you have well thought of it. Will it not come and divide your Soul from the Body ? will it not come, and cut down the Body, and lay it on the cold Earth ? O deluded, besotted Sinners, that will not think of that that will be here so shortly ! O who has bewitched you, that you should not prepare for such a Messenger, that is coming to carry you into another World ? O how should I weep over dying Mortals, that will not think whither they are going ! O devilish, tempting World, that will not suffer Men to look and prepare for Death ! O cruel Sin and Flesh, that lull Souls asleep, and bind them up in Sloth and Darkness, till they are landed in endless Darkness and Despair ! O ! dear Friends ; awake, rouse up Sense and Reason, and bethink you where you will be in a little while ! Alas ! how many Funerals do we see, and how many Mourners go about the Streets ! Alas ! in how few Days must your Faces be changed, your Eyes and Lips be closed, this warm and walking Body stretched out as a cold stiff Corpse, and so confined up, and laid down in a dark Grave, out of Sight ! And will you then be proud and vain, and frothy, and gay, as you now are ? O good, dear Brethren of Mankind, think of Death, and make all wise and holy Preparation for it !

14. *Think what Heaven is.* But who can tell the Joys and Pleasures that are there ! Oh that you would be willing to go and see, and feel them there ! O how shall I adjure you to be in good Earnest for Heaven ! then you will find at last that it was well worth all your Pains and Care. There is the Fountain, and all the Springs

Springs, of Life, and Peace, and Bliss: There dwells the eternal God, in whose Presence is Fulness of Joy for evermore. There dwells the Lord Jesus, who will fill you with Happiness from the Light of his Countenance: There dwell the happy Angels, whose Company will be very pleasant and delightful: There dwell the holy Souls that are gone from the World, and are now made perfect, and will make you joyful. If all this good Company will not make you strive for Heaven in good Truth, you deserve never to come thither. Shall Heaven and all its Inhabitants be despised by you? Oh remember this in the Day when you are shut out thence.

15. *Ob! consider what Hell is!* Consider, that you may not come there. God make you willing to escape those Torments! O what Tongue can tell or Heart conceive, the Sharpness, and Severity, and Length of them! There is the Abode of the Devils and damned Spirits, that are hated and cursed by the holy God: and how great are the Power of his Wrath, and the Weight of his Fury! How dreadful, doleful, and terrible, must his Justice, and Indignation, and Revenge be! O the Worm that is there will never die! O the Fire that is there; and will never be quenched! O the Lake of burning Brimstone, that flames and torments for ever and ever! O the Cries and Howlings that are there Night and Day! O the Weeping and Wailing, and Gnashing of Teeth! O the Pains and Stings of Conscience! O the Horror, Anguish, Confusion, and Despair! Lord, evermore save us from that Place of Torment! O make us willing to be, and to do all that is needful to save us from the Wrath to come! O sit down, poor Mortals, and bethink ye! What if ye should be in Hell, before this Month be ended! O how inconceivably sad will your Cases be to all Eternity! And why not you as well as Thousands that are there already, and Thousands more that will go there hereafter! What do we do more than others? How little

Care



Care do we take to prevent Damnation? O awake, all you that have Souls to be saved! For God's Sake, for those precious dear Souls Sake, have a Care of running into the Woes and Flames of Hell!

16. *Consider, for the Lord Jesus Christ's Sake, consider, the eternal Day of Judgment!* The Day when all Mankind must be doomed to their eternal State and Abode! O blessed Day! O doleful Day! The most blessed that ever came to some; the most doleful that ever was to others. Oh who can tell the Joys or Sorrows of that Day?

A Day, one should think, that should continually keep the World in Awe. O how will you look the Judge in the Face? How will ye do, when the Arch-Angel's Voice and Trumpet shall open your Graves and startle you there, and draw you forth to appear before all the World? How will ye be able to behold all that Company? How will your Consciences then bear you out? How will you endure to have your Names called over, your Accounts called, your Talents of Time, and Holy Means and Mercies reckoned for? What Account can you give of what you have been doing in the Body ever since you were there? O how will you bear the Judge's Voice and the eternal Sentence he will pronounce? O poor Sinners that forget that Day! O stupid senseless Souls, that will not remember that the Lord is coming, and coming to judge the World in Righteousness!

Now, beloved Brethren of Mankind, will you think a little on these Things? Are they not Things fit and worthy to be thought of? Will not the Meditation of them do you Good? Will it not tend to make you better and wiser; more fit for Death and a better World? The Lord help you to understand, and love the Things of your Peace!

What Knowledge have you got? Is it not very small, and lame, and lifeless? Does it set you upon the Love of God, and praying to him, and keeping of his Com-



mandments? If it does not, what is it good for? Will such a Knowledge, or such a Faith save you? It may be, you sometimes repeat the *Creed*, (or the *Belief*,) and the *Lord's Prayer*, and the *Ten Commandments*; and do you understand them, and love the Truths, and Requests, and Duties, contained there? Can your Minds go along with the Words? or do ye say them by Rote, as Parrots, without knowing the Meaning? Some ignorant Folks take the *Belief* to be a Prayer; and some take the Commandments to be so too. O the Ignorance in some Christian Countries! Give me Leave to examine you in these Things a little: Let me help you to look into your own Hearts, and see what Knowledge or Darknes is there; what Evil, or what Goodness is there! Let each of you, then, that reads this Letter, seriously and honestly examine yourselves, upon these Three Parts of Christianity, thus:

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## SECT. II. *Self-Examination, derived from the Creed.*

1. *Believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth.* Do I believe there is a God? O how much Atheism dwells in my Heart! How little have I lived as if I did believe that there is a God! How ready have I been to say, in my foolish Heart, there is no God! or else to wish that there was no God! How loth am I that there should be a God! lothe to be troubled with Religion and Godliness. How glad should I be if I might live as I list, and not be called upon to fear and worship God. Alas! how little have I known and believed the Nature and glorious Perfections of God; his Purity, Light, Wisdom, Power, and Love. How little have I considered that he is such a Father as has an eternal Son: that he is Father of Angels and Men, by making them so like himself:

himself! that he is Almighty, and can do whatever he pleases! That he is Maker of the wide and beautiful World that we see! O how oft have I seen the Heavens, and never thought on him that made them! Seen the Sun, and Moon, and Stars, and never thought on that Wisdom and Might, that framed them and hanged them there! How oft have I seen the Earth and Sea, the Mountains and Rivers, and never thought on the great Creator! How oft have I seen the Meadows covered with Grass, the Fields with Corn and Grain, and never remembered that good God that made all these Things! How oft have I seen the Beasts and Cattle, the Flocks and Herds, and not considered who made them, or whether they were once made or not; or who gave them into the Possession of Men! If I have believed these Things, how vain and ineffectual, how dead and unthankful, has all my Faith been!

2. *And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord! who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.* When did I consider all this and endeavour to understand it? Do I really believe that there was once such a Person in the World, as Jesus Christ? that, about Seventeen Hundred Years ago, he lived in the Jews Country, called *Canaan*; that there he was born, particularly at a Town called *Bethlehem*? that there he preached and did Abundance of mighty Miracles, went up and down doing Good, instructing Sinners, and saving Souls! Do I believe that he is the Son of God in such a manner as no other Men are? that he is the eternal Son of God? that he is the eternal Word and Wisdom of the Father, and with him, the Maker of all Things that are made? that he is therefore Lord and Heir of all Things? Have I believed that this blessed Son of God, for us, and our Redemption, took on him our Nature, was united to such a rational Soul as we have, and to such a Body of Flesh, and Blood, and Bones, as we have?

Oh

Oh wonderful Condescension! Do I believe, therefore, that he is both God and Man, in two distinct Natures and yet one Person, one Redeemer? Have I considered that he is justly called Jesus, that is, Saviour, because he must and will save his People from their Sins? and justly called Christ too, that is anointed, because he is appointed and prepared of God to be the Saviour of the World? and that he is the Messiah, the great Deliverer, that was of old, promised to the Church of the *Jews*? O how great and strange is it to believe, that the human Nature, or the united Body and Soul of Jesus Christ, was formed by the Power of the Holy Ghost, in the Virgin's Womb! that they were conceived there, and so that he was brought forth and born of a pure and holy Virgin! one whose name was *Mary*, supposed to be the Daughter of one *Heli*, and afterwards espoused to one *Joseph*, who was by Trade a Carpenter, and the Son of one *Jacob*. Have I known and pondered, and believed, these Things concerning Jesus Christ?

3. *Who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, and descended into Hell.* Have I believed this strange Report? Have I considered the great Compassion and Love of the Son of God, who would sorrow and suffer for us? Have I considered what he suffered, and for what he suffered, and how great his sufferings were, and for what End, and Use, and Purpose? He suffered all his Life long; was born to Sorrows and Grief: He suffered from God, from Men, and Devils: He suffered from private Persons, and from the Ministers, and Magistrates, and Courts of Justice: All were Enemies to him, who came to bear our Sins: He suffered from the *Jews*, his own Countrymen, and from the *Gentiles*, that were strangers to him; particularly he suffered under the Government and in the Court of one *Pontius Pilate*, one that was a *Roman*, and was sent by the Emperor of *Rome* to be Governor of the *Jews*, who were, then under the  
Power

Power of the Romans. This *Pontius Pilate* declared *Jesus Christ* to be innocent, and yet delivered him to the *Jews* to be crucified. O horrible Death! to be nailed by the Hands and Feet to a Tree, and there to hang in Pain, and Hunger, and Shame, till Life can last no longer! A reproachful Death this was, to hang with Thieves between Heaven and Earth! A cursed Death this was, pronounced accursed by the Law of God. And then, when he was dead, he was taken down from the Cross, and laid in a new Grave, and his Soul departed from his Body, and went and appeared among the Dead, among the Spirits that were loosed and gone from this World; among them he appeared as one that had received the Wages of Sin, as a Lamb slain for us. O the Love and Grace of the Lord Jesus! All this he endured for our Redemption; that he might redeem us from Sin, and Death, and Hell, and from the everlasting Wrath and Curse of God. O how hard it is to believe this Mercy, and Love, and Grace; that the Son of God should suffer, and bleed, and die, for such a poor, worthless, unthankful, Sinner! Lord, increase, my Knowledge of Jesus Christ, and of him crucified! Lord increase my Faith!

4. *The third Day he rose again from the Dead.* How great a Piece of divine Doctrine is this that Jesus Christ should rise again from the Dead! that his Soul should return from Paradise, and be united to the Body again, and enter with it upon an eternal Life! How great a Confirmation is this, that our Lord Jesus Christ was the Son of God, was a Light and Teacher sent of God, and so was owned by him, to be the Saviour of the World! O excellent Truth! is Christ risen, then he has conquered Death, and will give his Servants the Victory! Did he rise from the Dead the third Day, that is the third Day from his Death; that must be the first Day of the Week, for, all the *Jews* Sabbath, (which was the seventh Day and our Saturday,)



day,) he lay in the Grave. Did he rise on the first Day of the Week? How honourable is that Day! O how pleasant should it be to me to think of our Saviour's Resurrection from the Dead!

5. *He ascended up into Heaven, and sitteth on the right Hand of God, the Father Almighty.* O how highly is our Lord Jesus Christ exalted! How high is he in the Favour and Love of God! Is he gone to Heaven? Alas, how little have I thought of the Heaven to which he is gone! How great and glorious is the Company there! Surely there is one kind familiar Friend, since our Lord Jesus is there: Is he at the right Hand of God? How happy is he after all his Sufferings and Sorrow! for, at God's right Hand are Pleasures for evermore. O that I could think of Heaven more, since Jesus Christ is there! O that I could set my Heart and Affections on Heaven, since he is there! Surely he will remember his Servants; and speak a Word on the Behalf of his Beloved, since he is set down at the right Hand of God.

6. *From thence he shall come to judge both the Quick and the Dead.* O strange! will Jesus Christ come again? he that suffered, and was crucified, and slain, will he come again? He that is set down at the right Hand of God, will he come again to this World? surely he has some great Work to do! and O how great is it, to judge the whole World! O who is able for such a Work? who can remember the Thoughts, and Words, and Deeds, that have been in the World, from the Beginning of the World to the End of it? who can know all Men's Hearts, and Designs, and Aims? who can know all the Thoughts and Languages that have been in the World? Yea, who can tell all the Men, and Women, and Children, that have been in the World, and will be to the End of the World? All this does Jesus Christ know, or he cannot judge the World in Righteousness. Alas,

how little do we think of this! how oft do we mutter  
ever



over this Belief, without thinking and believing that Jesus Christ is coming to judge the World! O what will become of the Dead when they shall be called to an Account! O what will become of the Quick, of those that shall be found alive, when Jesus Christ comes! what will they do when the Earth shall quake under them! when Flames shall fly round about them! when the Heavens shall open over their Heads, and they shall see the Son of God come with all his Angels, and with mighty Power and great Glory! O astonishing Day! why is the World so sleepy and secure! O how little have I believed that Day! how little fitted and prepared myself for it! O what shall I do then, and where shall I appear! in what Condition shall I then be! how shall I bear the Judge's Face, and Voice, and Sentence! Lord teach me to prepare for that Day.

7. *I believe in the Holy Ghost.* Did I ever bethink myself who the Holy Ghost is? if not, how can I profess to believe in him? have I heard and considered whether there be any Holy Ghost or not? If I have, who is he; surely he is one that is excellent and pure, since he is called *Holy*; one that is in himself invisible and immortal, since he is called *Ghost*, or *Spirit*; one that is a Person, since I must believe him, and trust him; and a divine Person too, since I must believe in him for spiritual and everlasting Blessings; must believe in him, as in God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Do I believe the Holy Ghost, and the Things he has revealed in his Scriptures? For, holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Do I believe in the Holy Ghost, and depend upon him for the Work that he has to do? for the Work of Sanctification, and making me meet for Heaven. Have I been baptized in the Name of the Holy Ghost? Surely I should remember my Dedication to him, should honour and serve him, as one to whom I had been devoted. O how little have I remembered

remembered and regarded the Holy Ghost, or the holy Spirit of God.

8. *The Holy Catholic Church.* This Church I am to believe, though I believe not in it; I place not my Hope, and Trust, and Confidence, there, but in the living God. I have often heard of the Church, but what is it? it is Something pure, and devoted to God, for it is holy. So then that which is not holy seems not to belong to the Church; and then they, that are not holy, are not properly of the Church. Alas! how many, that call themselves Christians, are cut off from this Church! and surely it is not, in the Compass of it, a little narrow Thing. It is Catholic, it is universal and general: It is not like the *Jews* Church, confined to one Land, or Country, or People; it is spread into divers Nations and Countries. So then it shall seem that all who are holy in any Land or Country, belong to the Church, to this Church of God. O what a good Company is this: how well may I believe there is such a Church as that, since God will have a Seed to serve him; and Christ will see the Travail of his Soul, and bring many Sons to Glory.

9. *The Communion of Saints.* Who are these Saints? Are there any such now in the World? I sometimes hear of Popes making Saints, and sometimes I hear the Name cast upon the People by Way of Contempt, as if they were not what they profess to be, or as if it were scandalous to be a Saint: And yet I must believe there are Saints, and that there is a Communion of them. Frequent Mention is made of them in Scripture. Who then can they be? Can they be any other than true Christians? they that are Lovers of God and Christ, they that are holy, are Saints. Then all the Members of the holy Catholic Church are Saints. O happy Company that is made up of Saints! Surely these should live and walk in Communion; they should own one another as Members of the same Body and Church, and

and as belonging to the same Lord and Head: They should love one another, relieve, and succour, and pray for, one another: Surely, they should help one another in the holy Way to Heaven.

10. *The Forgiveness of Sins.* And will God indeed forgive Sins! How unwilling are Men to forgive Injuries done to them! O how glorious is God, who might demand the full Punishment of our Iniquities! Is there Forgiveness with God? O how glad should such a poor Sinner be! one that is so laden with Corruption, and Sin, and Guilt; one that has such an evil, wicked, Heart and Nature! one that is prone to Unrighteousness, and Disobedience, as the Sparks fly upwards! one whose Life has been so idle and vain, so far from the Law and Love of God! And will God forgive me? O what Need then have I to arise and go to him for his Forgiveness! Woe unto me that ever I was born, if God will not forgive me, and pardon me! O how should I study and seek his Forgiveness, and study the Way in which it may be found! Upon what Score will God forgive me? How will his Justice be cleared, and satisfied, and glorified? O there is a Mediator with him, a great High Priest, that has presented him with an atoning Sacrifice, and has poured out his Soul an Offering for Sin! This is the Son of God, who has by himself purged away our Sin. And so we have Redemption, even Remission, or Forgiveness of Sins, through his Blood: O that I might now heartily repent of my Sins, and turn from them to God, and embrace Jesus Christ the Saviour, and so go to God for his Forgiveness of all my Sins.

11. *The Resurrection of the Body.* O dear, must this Body be raised from the Dead? What! when it has lain rotting divers Years in the Dust, and when no Man can tell where the Parts of it are! O what vast Knowledge must find them out! what mighty Power must put them together, and give them Life! What

must all the Graves be opened? must all Men's Bodies be raised? O what a vast Number will then meet together! O, who believes this Report? who strives by all Means to gain a happy Resurrection from the Dead? O tha I might mortify the Lusts of the Body! O that I might keep it chaste, and pure, and clean, that it may have a blessed Resurrection! O that I could believe this Article more, and live in the Expectation of and Preparation for the Resurrection of this Body.

12. *And the Life everlasting, Amen.* What! is there another Life after this? a Life that is everlasting and will never end! O! what does the foolish World think of? O how strange must that be that is everlasting! how far different from this! how inconceivable is an endless Life! how inexpressible, whether it be spent in Joy or Torment! Though an endless Life in Torment, is rather called everlasting Death. O how afraid am I to Die! and yet how little do I fear everlasting Death! how willing am I to live, and yet how negligent of everlasting Life! O! what will it be to live for ever with the blessed God, and with the blessed Saviour, and with the blessed Angels! with the Holy Catholic Church, when it shall be made blessed with all the Saints, when they shall be in a blessed Communion. O what a Life will this be! O that I had all this While more believed this Life! O blessed God, evermore teach me the Way to this Life! O good Ministers and Preachers, open to us the Words of this Life! awaken, alarm, and rouse us, and set us on seeking this everlasting Life! *Amen.*

Thus, Brethren, have you considered how you have believed? have ye believed in vain? have ye not believed with such an idle lazy Faith that will do you no Good, and will not save your Souls? O the lifeless, fruitless Faith of Christians! Is it not much such as St. *James* speaks of, and is without Works of Obedi-



Obedience and Holiness and is not much better than the Faith of Devils? O how deceived and disappointed will many Christians be, that have believed no better!

### SECT. III. *Self Examination derived from the Lord's Prayer.*

AND have ye prayed any better than ye have believed? have not your Prayers been as dead, as empty, and heartless, as your Belief? You say you *believe in God, the Father Almighty*: But when did you go down upon your Knees, and humbly and seriously pray to your Almighty Father? when did you, and where did you, solemnly and heartily honour and worship him, and pour out your Souls before him? O the Emptiness and Heartlessness of Christian Prayer and Worship! it may be, you sometimes say the *Lord's Prayer*, or hear it said by others: Do you understand it? and does your understanding Heart pray over the Petitions and Contents of that Prayer? Are your Hearts cast into the Mould of that Prayer? Are they fitted and prepared according to the holy Requests that are there made? If not, how can you pretend to pray according to that heavenly Prayer? Therefore let every one examine himself and his Mind, and try, if that Prayer, and the sacred Petitions of it, are written upon his Heart. Consider and reflect thus.

L. *OUR Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name.* O how little have I considered that God is Father of the World, and particularly of Mankind! that we are the Offspring of God, having been made in his holy Likeness! and that God is still providing for and taking Care of Man! that he gives us our Life, our Breath, and our All! and that he is our redeemed Father too, having sent his Son to re-

deem and save us! O how high and glorious is God, who dwells chiefly in Heaven, though the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him! but how little do I think of his Throne and holy Habitation, when I come before him! how little do I think of his Honour and of his Perfections, when I come to pray that his Name may be hallowed! how great is his Name, and how great Things are signified thereby! His Name surely signifies to us his Greatness and Majesty, his Attributes and Glories! but how little have I been concerned for the Name of God, or for any Thing whereby he makes himself known! how little have I cared whether his Name be known on Earth or not! or whether his Gospel be spread in the World or not! Alas! how hypocritically have I prayed that his Name should be hallowed and sanctified, when I have so little cared for his Name, and Honour, and Glory! Is it my Heart's Desire that Religion should flourish, that Men should sanctify God in their Hearts, and make him their Fear and their Dread? How else can I pretend to pray, *Hallowed be thy Name*? O how little has my Heart accompanied this Petition!

2. *Thy Kingdom come.* Do I love God's Kingdom? and would I have it to come into the World? surely, where God reigns Godliness must reign: And would I have Godliness to reign? Then how holy must our Towns and Countries be! Then we must have more reading and preaching than we have now; more and better praying and singing of Psalms than we have now: And shall I like that? Am I not ready to think we have too much of that already? Have I not been ready to think we have too many Sabbaths, and Fast-Days, and Thanksgiving-Days already? And what should we have if God's Kingdom should come? Surely this Petition is little considered. Can I neglect Godliness myself, and despise it in others, and yet pretend to pray *thy Kingdom come*? Am I ready to wonder what makes People be so strict and solemn  
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sometimes in and about Religion, and yet do I pray *thy Kingdom come*? How holy must God's Kingdom be! how holy must Men be, when they are hearty Subjects to God! How holy will the Kingdoms of this World be, when they are become the Kingdoms of God and of his Christ! How holy will Princes, and Magistrates, and Ministers, and Masters of Families, then be! The Kingdom of God is Religion and Righteousness, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost; and have I desired these Things? Lord, forgive me, that I have so often ignorantly and hypocritically mentioned this Petition! and that my Heart gives my Mouth the Lye, when I say, *thy Kingdom come*!

3. *Thy Will be done on Earth as it is done in Heaven.* Alas! If I love not Godliness and the Kingdom of God, how can I pray, that God's Will may be done on Earth as it is in Heaven? God's Will is just, and holy, and pure: God's Will is, that we put away all Sins, and Lusts, and Corruptions. God's Will is, that we should deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present World. And have I desired all this? O how much to the contrary! How have I served the Will of the Flesh, and the Will and Humour of a sinful World! How have I served the Will of the Devil and of wicked Company! and how many more do I see, do so too, that seem to go through this Prayer with a deal of Devotion! O the Deceit and Guile that lie in our Hearts! How is the Will of God done in Heaven? It is done perfectly, joyfully, constantly, there; but how ready have I been to resist and contradict his Will! to resist and refuse the Love and Graciousness of his Will! the Holiness and Righteousness of his Will! the Authority and Justice of his Will! How ready to repine and murmur at his Providences! to rebel against all the Discoveries of his Will! Lord, pardon that I have no more loved and liked thy Will! and that I have not more sincerely and uprightly prayed, *Thy Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven*!

4. *Give us this Day our Daily Bread.* And have I sought and looked for my Food and Provisions at God's Hands? Have I not rather expected them from my Money, from my Parts and Skill, from my Labour and Industry in the World? But how little have I considered, that my Estate and Money, my Parts and Skill, my Health for Labour and Industry, are all from God? He can curse my Estate and Substance; he can soon blast my Parts, and Health, and Business, and soon turn me out of all, and deprive me of my Daily Bread. All Things depend on him and His Pleasure. The Rich and the Poor meet together in the World, and he is the Maker of them both. If I have my daily Bread, God can take away his nourishing Virtue; he can take away my Stomach, my Taste, my Appetite and Digestion; so that neither Food nor Physick shall do me any Good; so that all my Dependence must be on God, every Blessing must come from him, must be sought and craved from him. O what Need have I then to go to him every Day, and beg the Mercies and the Bread of every Day! and thereby own my daily Necessities, and my daily Dependence and Reliance on the God of Life!

5. *And forgive us our Debts as we forgive our Debtors.* Sin has made me indebted to God, indebted to his Holiness, and Justice, and righteous Law; a Debt I can never pay, with Safety and Salvation; the Wages of my Sin is Death, everlasting Death, under the Wrath and Curse of God. Woe to me for ever, if that Debt should be demanded of me! where shall I then be? I must be cast into Prison and Judgment, into the Prison of Hell. I must seek and get a Pardon and forgiveness, or else I am undone, for there is no contending with God, no justifying of myself before him; I must confess and bewail, and beg his Pardon. And there are Hopes of Pardon, and Room for the Prayer of Faith, since there is a Mediator and Peace-Maker with him, a great and worthy Advocate, even Jesus Christ



Christ the righteous, who is a Propitiation for our Sins. Through him I go to God, and beg that for his Sake he will blot out all my Iniquities; and that I may be made meet to be pardoned by him, I must put on a forgiving Spirit towards others. And yet how little have I considered that, in the putting up this Prayer! How oft have I come before God with an uncharitable malicious Heart, with envious and revengeful Designs! and yet had the Impudence to pray, *Forgive us as we forgive our Debtors, or, As we forgive those that trespass against us.* O the Guilt and Deceitfulness of the Heart! O the many hypocritical lying Prayers that are put up to God! Lord, teach me to take Heed to my Spirit and pray better.

6. *And lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.* O how little have I thought of the Temptations of the World, in which I live! I have been ready to think it a good pleasant World, rather than an ensnaring tempting one. Little have I considered the Temptations of Riches, or Poverty, of Trade and Business, of every Relation and Condition in Life: Yet how soon and how easily does every Thing draw me from God, and my Duty to him! Little have I thought of the tempting Devil, that is continually going about to ensnare, and deceive, and devour. O how much Evil is there in the World! Evil of Sin, and that provokes God; Evil of Sorrow and Punishment, that God inflicts for Sin. How much is there in mine Heart, which God might deliver me up unto: O with what a humble and sensible Heart then should I come and pray to God, not to lead me, or deliver me into Temptation! (My evil Heart is ready to betray me into Temptation:) And that he would save me from my Sins, and from deserved Judgment; and that he would please to keep me to his heavenly Kingdom.

And,

And, as I should pray to, so should I praise, God. I should admire his Goodness and Goodness, should bless his holy Name for ever and ever. But how little has this been the Temper of my Heart, the Design of my Mind, the Business of my Life! How much have I received from God! how little have I returned to him! how little loved him or thanked him for what he has done for my Soul or for my Body! how ready should I be to ascribe to him the *Kingdom*, who is Lord of all! and the *Power*, who orders and manages and disposes all! and the *Glory*, for whose sake and Pleasure, all Things are and were created and ordained! *Amen.*

Thus, consider what you have prayed, and how you have prayed; how little you have prayed with the Heart, and Spirit, and Understanding. And is this the Praying that will please God, or will obtain any Blessing from him, or do you any Good? O the vain, loose, customary, heartless, Prayers, that are used before the holy God! and that in Christian Countries, by professed Christians, and under the Words that the Lord Jesus has taught them.

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#### SECT. IV. *Self-Examination derived from the Ten Commandments.*

AND have you observed the Will of God any better than you have prayed to him? If Prayers should be lived over, how little have you lived according to your Prayers? What Obedience has God had from you? Have you thought on his Commandments! have ye thought on your Ways, and turned your Feet to his Testimonies? O the Sinfulness and Rebellion of Mankind! O sad! that Man, that was made in the Image of God, should be now unreconciled to God, and to the Law of God, and to that sanctified Obedience that is due to God!

Come

Come then, Christians, call yourselves to an Account; consider how you have minded the Will and Law of God! Will you not obey him that made you? him that gave his Son to redeem you? him that knows what is for your Good, and commands you Nothing but what is for your Peace and Happiness? Is God good, and will you not love his Law! O perverse, crooked Souls, that will not love the Way of Life and Joy! How good is God not to leave you in the Dark concerning his Will, but to declare it so freely and plainly in the Bible! and to comprehend it briefly in ten short Commandments, that he that runs may read them, and he that has a weak Head may remember them! They were of old given to *Moses* by God, and by *Moses* to the Church of the *Jews*, and afterwards expounded and given by Jesus Christ to his holy Catholic Church. Now try yourselves, your ears and Ways, according to these Commandments.

God speaks them, for he is the Law-giver; and he enforces them by such a Preface as this: *I am the Lord thy God, that brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, and out of the House of Bondage.* So he brought up his ancient People the *Jews*. *Egypt* was a House of Bondage to them: There they were holden in cruel Slavery and Misery: So the World is the Devil's Captive. We are by Nature Heirs of Wrath, and Hell, and Destruction. The Devil is ready to tyrannize over us. Sin makes us its Slaves; and, when it has done, pays us our Wages in Death and Hell. But God has visited us in his Mercy, has sent his Son to redeem us from the House of Bondage, and to recover us to Heaven and heavenly Rest. How worthy is the Lord, this *Jehovah*, to be my God! O how just it is I should choose him for my Father, my Lord, and Lawgiver, my eternal Happiness! O how am I bound to love him, to serve him, and keep his Commandments!

1. *Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.* No surely: There can be but one God, and he is all-sufficient and almighty, able to make me eternally happy. Whom  
then

then should I love and serve but him? to whom should I pay Homage, Adoration, Worship, Prayers, and Praises, but to him?—to whom should I resign, and devote and dedicate myself, but to him? But O the Atheism of my Heart! How long have I bid the Almighty depart from me! how long have I refused the Knowledge of him and his Ways! how unwilling have I been to take him for my God, to love and honour him as my God, to serve and glorify him as my God! O the Idolatry of my Heart! how many Idols have I set up there in the Room of my God! The World has been an Idol, and has reigned there! my Earthliness, my Worldliness, and Covetousness, is Idolatry; the Flesh has reigned there; the Lusts of the Flesh have been my Idols; they have been served and pleased, while my God has been diserved, and displeased, and disregarded! Sin has reigned over this Soul, and this Body, which should have been presented as a living Sacrifice to the living God. O how much Idolatry have I committed, even before God's Face! he has stood by, and looked on, while I forsook him, and laid out my Love and Affections, and Desires, upon Things displeasing and contrary to him. O how guilty am I of breaking this Command, and unable to stand before him on that Account!

2. *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven Image, or the Likeness of any Thing that is in Heaven above, or that is in the Earth beneath, or in the Water under the Earth, Thou shalt not bow thyself down to them, nor serve them; for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate me; and shewing Mercy unto Thousands of them that love me, and keep my Commandments.* Does God declare himself jealous in this Commandment? O what Regard ought I to have thereunto! Shall I dare to provoke the Lord to Jealousy? Am I stronger than he? O what Care then should I have of the Worship I present him! Alas!

why



why should I presume to worship God according to my Fancy and Imagination? I am not so well acquainted with his Nature and his Perfections as to be fit to appoint a Worship for him. He is a Spirit, and a God of Light and Holiness, and so must be worshipped in Spirit and Truth, and with a holy Heart. But what Ordinances of Worship will please him, he must determine. He is a glorious, boundless Spirit, of whom no Image, no Picture, can be made. How vain and heinous then is the Presumption of those that pretend to worship him by Images, Pictures, Statues, and such Devices of their own! O that I may beware of their Corruptions! How ready must I be to consult the declared Will of God! to consult the Practice of our Lord Jesus, and his Apostles, lest I should bring Iniquity upon my House and Family, and should forfeit that Mercy, that God keeps for the Thousands that love him, and obey his Commandments.

3. *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain.* And how miserable are they whom God will not hold guiltless! whom he will condemn as guilty at his Judgment! And yet how little has this overawed my Heart, and drawn me to fear the great and dreadful Name of the Lord my God! O how apt have I been to play and sport with his Name! how apt to cry out in the use of his Name, to make certain Appeals to him, in saying, *O God! O Lord! Lord, save me! Lord, Bless me!* without thinking on him whose Name I then used! and without pretending to pray seriously to him at that Time! how inconsiderately and irreverently do I mention his Titles, his Attributes, his Words, and the Names that signify his Perfections! how vainly do I use his Name, even when I profess to pray, and cry, *Our Father, which art in Heaven!* How profanely do I swear by his Name, even in taking a lawful Oath before the Magistrate: How little do I remember the Greatness and Holiness  
of

of that Searcher of Hearts, to whom I then appeal !  
 O how much Sin lies upon us, both upon the Account  
 of common Oaths, and also upon the Account of more  
 solemn Oaths, taken in Court before Judges and other  
 Officers ! How ignorantly, rashly, falsely, and pro-  
 fanely do Men swear ! Lord, pardon all this Guilt !  
 teach Men to repent of it ! and teach me to honour,  
 and fear, and love, thy Name !

4. *Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy, Six Days  
 shalt thou labour and do all thy Work ; but the seventh  
 Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God ; in it thou shalt  
 not do any Work, thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, thy  
 Man-servant, nor thy Maid-servant, nor thy Cattle, nor  
 the Stranger that is within thy Gates : For in six Days  
 the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that  
 in them is, and rested the Sabbath Day : Wherefore the  
 Lord blessed the Seventh Day, and hallowed it.* O how  
 holy should all my Time be ! it is given by God,  
 and given for great and good Works. How wise-  
 ly and graciously has God divided my Time ! some  
 is more immediate for him and for my Soul ; some  
 for my Body and the Affairs of this World : How  
 liberal is God to allow me six Days for my worldly  
 Business ! and to take one in seven to himself ! O  
 how just should I be to God, and gladly allow him  
 his own Day ! and just and wise for myself, in well  
 spending the Time that God has given me ! But,  
 alas ! Lord, how can I look back upon my past Time  
 and Days without Grief and Repentance ! O how much  
 dear and precious Time have I lost ; how much has  
 been spent in the Ignorance and Folly of Childhood !  
 how much has been lost in Idleness, and Games,  
 and Company-keeping ! O that I had better remem-  
 bered this Commandment, and spent my six Days bet-  
 ter in some honest Business and Service ! O how much  
 better had it been with me than it is now ! better with  
 my Body, with my Soul, with my Family, and all my  
 Affairs ! O these sinful Holidays, that have consumed

so much of my Time ! O these sinful Wakes and Fairs, that are such Snares to youthful Persons, and bring them into such Temptations, that often ruin their Souls for ever ! O how wise and good is God's Command, that six Days I should honestly work and labour ! Had I followed this Commandment and Counsel, how much more rich and healthy, and honest, and useful, had I been than I am now ! Will God forgive all the Laziness, and Negligence, and Vanity, of my Life ? O my ill-spent Time, that can never be recovered ! O the happy pleasant Days that I have lost, and can never be regained ! O how swift is Time, and how much Work have I for it all ! how shall I want it when I come to die ! O that I may value it more, especially the Day and Time that God has ordained for himself, and for the Good of Souls.

But, alas ! how ready have I been to alienate it from him ! and to spend it in Idleness, or worldly Business, or vain Visits, or Mirth, and Chat ! How little is God served on that Day ! and my Soul benefited by it ! O how many Sabbaths have I lost, which will be put down to my Account ! how little Good have I gained by them all ! how little do I love God, and how little thank him and praise him for Creation and Redemption, since I am so soon weary of that Day, that is to remember both ! O that I might more thankfully remember the Lord Jesus, and his Resurrection, and so more gladly and holily observe the Lord's Day ! O that I may then dress my Soul for Heaven, and take Care that all my Family and all within my Power should set that Day apart for the Lord.

5. *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy Days may be long in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* And is not Life desirable ? how good is God to add Promises to our Duty ? and to add the Promises of the Life that now is, as well as that that is to come ? But little has this Promise prevailed with me to keep

this Commandment! Undutifulness is natural to me; this Pride of my Heart makes me despise my Superiors. O the Power of Sin, that makes us stubborn and ungrateful even to natural Parents, to Father and Mother! No wonder then we are contemptuous and disrespectful to other Superiors and Governors either in Church or State. How excellent is relative Duty to those we stand related to, whether Superiors, Inferiors, or Equals! O that I could learn it better, and bring my Heart to the Observance of this necessary Command!

6. *Thou shalt not kill.* One would think this were an easy Commandment. Who can think of murdering a Man? But whither would the Naughtiness of my Heart carry me? What is the Meaning of those Passions that are so apt to rise there? what would be the Issue of Anger, and Malice, and Envy, and Hatred, if they were not seasonably stopt? how many Murders are committed through such Passions as these? O that I may look after my own Heart, and mortify all such Corruptions! but have I not wounded and murdered my own Soul? how oft do I run into Sin, and so into eternal Death! how little have I cared for its Life, and Peace, and Salvation? have I not also been guilty of murdering other Men's Souls? ready to draw them to the same Sin and Destruction? ready to hinder them from repenting and turning unto God? The Lord save me from the Guilt of Self-murder, and of Soul-murder!

7. *Thou shalt not commit Adultery.* But, alas! how unclean is the Heart! and, our Lord says, Adultery may be committed there. Unclean Thoughts, and Wishes, and Desires, are Adultery before God. Oh! how much Fornication and Adultery then are committed that the World does not know of! How addicted is Youth, especially to unclean, unchaste, Thoughts, Words, Gestures, Actions, Songs, and Signs of Lust! How much Iniquity lies upon us through the Breach  
of



of this Commandment! O! how many are the Lusts and vile Affections of the Soul! And who then can stand before the Heart-searching God?

8. *Thou shalt not steal.* Neither from God nor from Man. But how hard is it to be willing to give all their Dues! We are ready to rob God of his Honour and Time, and what he justly expects and demands from us. And how many Temptations entice us to secret Frauds, and Thefts, and Cozenage! How many Deceits are used in Trade! False Wares and Goods are put off instead of right and true! How much Guilt is there in Weights, Measures, Balances, and Modes of Trade! how much engrossing of Commodities to impose upon the Public! how much screwing and pinching poor Men in their Wages and Hire, in Order to get their Labour and Work for little or nothing! Oh! how many Ways are there for breaking this Commandment! Oh! that I may not forget the Apostle's Admonition, who says, *That no Man go beyond [or over-reach] or defraud his Brother in any Matter, because the Lord is the Avenger of all such, as we have forewarned you and testified;* 1 Thess. iv. 6.

9. *Thou shalt not bear false Witness against thy Neighbour.* How just a Law is this! A good Name is better than precious Ointment. How unjust is it for me to take away another's good Name! his Interest, his Usefulness, his Trade, and Livelihood, may depend upon his good Name. I must therefore beware that, by Whispering, Backbiting, or open Reproaches and Railing I do not spoil my Neighbour's Reputation and Fame; especially if I am called before the Magistrates, to bear Witness, I must be very cautious: As I must confess the Crimes that I have seen committed, because the public Good requires it, so I must dread to say any Thing false against my Neighbour then; for then I may bring his Estate, his Family, his Life, into Danger, and commit many Sins in one.

10. *Thou shalt not covet thy Neighbour's House, thou shalt not covet thy Neighbour's Wife, nor his Man-servant, nor his Maid-servant, nor his Ox, nor his Ass, nor any thing that is thy Neighbour's.* O if I could keep this Commandment, how easily would all the others be kept! If the Desires of my Heart were all regular, and just, and good, how ready should I be for all Obedience! But O the unruly Lusts and Affections that possess my Soul! O the constant Effects and Fruits of original Corruption and in-dwelling Sin! This makes me repine at the Providence and Disposals of God; makes me disquieted and discontented with the Lot and Condition that God assigns me; makes me imagine that other Folks State and Condition are better than mine; and then I am prompted to covet their Houses or their Lands, their Wealth, and Cattle and Goods; and this is an Inlet to Abundance of other Sins. O that I may see the Corruption of my Nature, and lament it before God! O what Need is there of the constant Practice of Self-denial and Submission to the just Will of God! How should I study Contentment with my own Portion and Lot in the World! and not Contentment only but Thankfulness too! How much have I more than others! and how good has God been to me all my Days! how many Snares and Temptations have I been delivered from, or may be delivered from, if I would but be content, and see the Goodness of God! while they that covet to be rich, fall into divers Snares and Mischiefs, and pierce themselves through with many Sorrows. *Lord, incline my Heart to thy Testimonies and not to Covetousness,* Psal. cxix. 36.

Thus examine thy Heart and Ways by God's Precepts. O poor Sinners, compare yourselves, your Consciences, and Practices with the Law of God! and then you will see that God is holy, and his Law is holy, reasonable, and good: But you are ready to drink in Iniquity like Water. You will see how un-  
able

able you are to keep this good and perfect Law, how inclined and prone you are to break it, and how abundantly you do break it in Thought, Word, and Deed. You will then see how unable you are to stand before God, upon the Account of Sin and Rebellion against him: you will see that there is no room to expect or hope to be justified by the Law; there can be no Appeal to that for Trial of your Innocence, Obedience, and Righteousness, before God: If God should try you for Life by the Rule of this Law, you are lost for ever; the Law will condemn you; every Commandment will pronounce you guilty: the Threatening curses you; for cursed is every one who continues not in all Things that are written in the Book of this Law, to do them!

You will then see the Need and Use of the Gospel, which is to bring in another Way of Justification and Life: You will then see the Need and the Use that there are of the Lord Jesus, who is the End of the Law, for Life and Righteousness, to them that believe. You will see the Reason and Use of Faith in Christ, whereby you are to receive, and embrace, and accept, the Lord your Righteousness, to free you from the Curse and Condemnation of the Law, and to be the Ground of your Reconciliation, Acceptance, Peace, and Life, with God. If out of a pure and penitent Heart, you have Faith in him, and an unfeigned Liking of him, and Consent that he should be yours, and you his, his Blood will cleanse you from all Sin, and give you Favour, and Friendship, and Joy, with God.

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#### SECT. V. *Enquiries relating to the Gospel of Christ.*

**O**H why then will ye not come to the Lord Jesus that you may have Life in him and by him? The eternal

eternal God has committed the Distribution and Bestowance of eternal Life to him, and hath borne this Record, That whosoever hath the Son, (the Lord Christ, the Son of God) hath and shall have everlasting Life. Oh why is he so despised and disregarded in the World ! He came from Heaven to teach us the Way thither, and to that eternal Life: He was sacrificed and slain to save us from Sin and Death, and procure for us eternal Life: He rose again from the Dead, to shew us that there shall be a Resurrection, and a Entrance into eternal Life: He is ascended and gone into Heaven, to tell us where eternal Life is, and to assure us that, in following him, we shall also ascend into eternal Life: He sent down his Spirit to enable his Apostles and Ministers to preach about the World eternal Life: He has brought Life, and Immortality, (eternal Life,) to Light and View by his heavenly Gospel: He continually gives his Spirit to sanctify and prepare Souls for eternal Life: He means to come again from Heaven, to bestow upon his few faithful Servants eternal Life: He has proved to the World that God has so loved us that he has given his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes on him should not perish, but have everlasting Life. And yet poor sinning perishing Mortals will not come to him for Life! will not admire, and value, and seek, eternal Life! will not take Means and Methods that lead to eternal Life; will not walk in that appointed holy Way, that will bring them to eternal Life; will resolvedly prefer the vain Things of this World, and the Pleasures of Sin, before the Joys of Heaven and eternal Life!

And now, Men, and Brethren, and Fathers, what shall we say to these Things? What shall we say to you, that are so lothe to enter into Life? O pray consider, what would you have God do, or the Lord Jesus do, or the Holy Ghost do, or Ministers do, for you?

1. What



1. What would you have God do more than he has done? He has brought eternal Life down to your Doors; offers it to your Minds, and Hearts, and Acceptance: But you will have none of him and none of it. What shall he do now? Shall he take away your Bibles, your Ministers, your Light, your Helps towards Heaven? Shall he leave you as much without Bibles, and Sabbaths, and Sermons, as he leaves the poor *Turks*, and *Heathens*, and wild *Indians*? O! what will you do then? If few are saved now, certainly fewer will be saved then; or, if God leaves you the Bible and his Ordinances, may he not justly say, you shall have Eyes, and not see; Ears, and not hear: Hearts, but not understand and consider? May he not now say, You shall not be converted, nor healed, nor pardoned, but marked out for eternal Destruction and Damnation? Alas, my Brethren, will you provoke God again to repent that he made Men on the Earth? and will you grieve him at the Heart? shall he repent that he has made you, and formed and fashioned you with so curious a Body, and so noble a Soul, which you use only to sin against him and provoke him to the Face! Would you have God repent that he redeemed you, and sent his Son to save you, and shew you the Way to eternal Life! Oh how dreadful will be the Issue of your continually offending him, and despising his Goodness, and Mercy, and Love!

2. What would you have the Lord Jesus do more than he has done already? would you have him bleed and die again? would you have him wounded and bruised for you again? If he should be served so again, it will do you no more Good than his last Sorrows and Sufferings have done; you would continue the same unkind, untoward, unthankful, Souls, as you are now. And do you think all your Folly, and Lusts, and Sin, are not displeasing and grievous to him? Do you think he is not well acquainted with all your Unkindness and Unadutifulness? with all your Contradiction to him and

to his Love and Blood? No Thanks to you if he is not wounded with Grief and broken in Heart. Do you think if he was on Earth, in the Condition he once was, that he would not mourn and weep over you, as once he did over hard-hearted *Jerusalem*, when he cried out, *Oh that thou hadst but known, in this thy Day, the Things that belong to thy Peace! but now they are hid from thine Eyes.* Will you do Nothing but grieve and disturb the good and gracious Saviour? what will he do for you when he comes again? will he not laugh at your Calamity, and mock when your Fear comes? Will he not rejoice to execute the terrible Judgments upon you, that you are willfully deserving at his Hand?

3. What would you have the Holy Ghost do? How long shall he be grieved and vexed by your Unbelief and hardness of Heart? would you have him turn and be your Enemy? would you have him leave you, and deliver you up to your own Hearts Lusts? Alas! what will become of you then? You will soon run into all Ungodliness, till you have sinned yourselvies into Hell. How easily can he open your Consciences and set your Sins in all their heinous Colours before your Faces, till you have no Rest Night nor Day! till you choose Strangling and Death rather than Life! and till you taste that Confusion and Despair that are the Beginning of eternal Torments!

4. What would you have poor Ministers do? Would you have them go on in their Work, or leave it off? If you would have them leave it off, how can they for Pity! Even for Pity to your poor perishing Souls! It was Pity and Compassion that made many of them undertake the Work. It pitied them to see such Numbers about them lie dead in Trespasses and Sin. It pitied them to see so many ignorant, foolish, careless, Souls, neglecting God and their great Salvation. Such Pity as this brought them into the Service, and made them willing to try by all Means to save some. And now must they all leave off the Work that they have begun?

begun? Shall there be none to speak for God, and for Christ, and for Heaven, and Holiness? Must Ministers believe and yet not speak? Must they believe the Word of God? believe there is a Heaven and Hell, and eternal Judgment, and yet have never a Word to say to poor Sinners, to warn them or counsel, or persuade them to lay hold on eternal Life? O what Cruelty is this to them and to dying Sinners!

Or would you have them go on? but how shall they be able when they see no Good done by their Work? Your Unbelief and Unprofitableness spoil all: And will you break their Hearts? What Wrong have they done ye, that you make them look sad, and melancholy, and drooping, from Day to Day? Alas! little do you know the Grief that you cause to good Ministers. You make them ready to throw away their Work, ready to accuse themselves for venturing upon it! and ready sometimes to accuse the Providence of God for laying it upon them: And yet would you have them go on? O cruel Friends, how can we go on with a sad Spirit and a pained Heart from Week to Week? O cruel Brethren, that will not be converted by us! will not be persuaded by us, to turn and live, and serve the living God! Time was, when Ministers had their Joy and Pleasure in the Success of their Labours, in the Conversion and Edification of Souls; but now we must sit sorrowful and discontented: *Israel* will not be gathered. The Sinners of Mankind will not return and be saved. O hard-hearted Men and Brethren, who have resolved that you will be none of our Blessing, none of our Joy, none of our Crown of Rejoicing, in the Day of our Lord Jesus!

Ah! dear Souls! How shall I bespeak you? How shall I make any Impression on you? Have you resolved you will not read this Letter; or, if you do, that you will not think on it or regard it? No wonder you will not, since you will not mind and regard the Word of God! How shall Man, a little sinful Dust, expect

to be heard, when the eternal God may not be heard ! But how then shall I mourn over you ? Will weeping for you do you any Good ? I hope I should then be willing to weep Tears of Blood for you, if they would but help you to Heaven and to eternal Life. But, alas ! the Saviour has wept over and over, and ye will not hear ! He has sweat Drops of Blood trickling down to the Ground, and ye will not hear ! He has poured out his Soul unto Death, and yet ye will not so hear and see that ye may ever live !

Now, dear Souls, what do you think of these Things ? Will ye not arise now and go to your heavenly Father ? Will ye not bethink yourselves of living better, and spending your Time better, for the Future ? This Letter can do but little towards it : But Books enough there are in the World that might be Blessings to your Souls. O happy is our Land in Store of good and pious Books of all Sorts and Subjects ! How diligent and laborious have abundance of God's Saints and Servants been in meditating and writing Books for us, and for the Good of our Souls ! What Nation under Heaven can compare with us for Multitude and Variety of sound, sweet, heavenly, practical, Discourses ? And is it not sad, that they should lie rotting and mouldering in Shops, and not be made Use of ? As many as there are, do you not want one more to invite and persuade ye to peruse those that are already written ? O that ye might more value a good Book. *Take up and read*, said the singing Voice to *St. Austin* in the Garden. O learn to get more alone, and converse with a searching, quickening, sanctifying Book ! How much Time is spent in Vanity, Trifling, and Sin ! how much Time is spent in Taverns, in Ale-houses, Coffee-houses, in impertinent Visits, idle Games, and Sports, that might be much better spent in a Chamber, in a Closet, with a good, serious, Book ! A good Book would help you to know God better, and to understand his Word bet-

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ter ; it would help you to know more of Christ, of Heaven, and eternal Life : It would help you to know more of yourselves and Sins, more of your Hearts and Ways, more of God's Commands and your Duty to him : It would teach you to love God and Man, to overcome the World, and live by Faith. It would teach you to hear better, and pray better, to be holy in all Conversation, and to be better prepared for Death and Judgment. O that you were reconciled to the reading of such good Books as these : *Sure Guide to Heaven* ; *Treatise of Conversion* ; *Vindication of Godliness* ; Bp. Reynolds's three Treatises ; *The Practice of Piety* ; Mr. Scudder's *Daily Walk* ; Burkitt's *Poor Man's Help*. To which may be added, many more of Sibbs, Preston, Jos. Symonds, Thomas Gouge, Bp. Hopkins, Mr. Clarkson and others. O how have good Men studied, and laboured, and wrote, that they might do Something to save your Souls ! And shall all their Labours be lost ? they would fain have you come to the same Heaven and Happiness to which they are gone. And will you unkindly refuse all their Help and Labour of Love. Ah ! poor Souls, what will become of you at last ? How many Helps, and Means, and Aids, have you to give an Account of, at the great, the last Day of the World ! how many holy Lives of God's Saints and Servants have you seen, which should have quickened and encouraged you in the Way to Heaven ! How much Time and Labour have they spent for you ! How many great and holy, pleasant and profitable Works have they left behind them, by which they still speak to you, and preach to you, and give Warnings, and Counsel, and Direction, to you ! O hear them, if you will not hear us ! Hear the Dead if you will not hear the Living. O with what Voice and Language would they speak to you, if they were to come again from the Dead ! O how earnest would they be with you, to escape those Flames that they have escaped ! and to enter  
into

into those Joys into which they are entered ! O what Descriptions could they represent of the Love of God, the Grace of Christ, the Glories of the Blessed ! But they must not. You must learn to live by Faith as they did, and to trust the Word and Truth of God as they did. You must follow them, through Faith and Patience, to inherit the Promises.

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SECT. VI. *An Affectionate Paraphrase on these Words, Why will ye die ?*

**H**OW can you, without a melting Heart, see and hear those compassionate Words of the good God, saying to you, *Why will ye die, O House of Israel !* The House of *Israel* was the Church of God, the Company of those that had the Book of God, the Covenant and Ordinances of God, among them. And yet God asks them, *Why will ye die*, and be lost for ever ! Supposing him asking you the same Question, you professed Christians ! you that now belong unto the *Israel* of God ! *O why will ye die ?* why will ye sin on, and refuse Mercy and Peace, and run yourselves wilfully into eternal Death and Damnation ?

Cannot ye suppose, that that compassionate, moving Question, does contain in it many more ? Suppose you hear the living God arguing the Case with you, and pleading for the Life of your Souls in such Language as this, *Why will ye die, O house of Israel ?*

Does it not seem as if God was more concerned for your Life and Happiness than you are for your own ? Does it not look as if God was willing to save the Life of your Souls, and that you are willing to throw away Life, and Soul, and Salvation, and all ? and does it not intimate Death creeps into the House of *Israel*, even into the Church of God ? and does it not intimate, too, that it is Pity the House of *Israel* should

die

die? Pity that they, that are so near to God, and have received so much from God, should at last fall short of the glory of God, and perish for ever! For, is it not Pity you should go at last without the great eternal Blessing to which ye have been called by the Word and Book of God? That you should lose the Blessings of *Abraham*, the Blessing of the eternal Inheritance? Is it not Pity that you should lose the Benefit of all those sacred, sanctifying, Privileges ye have enjoyed in the House of God? How long have ye sat there? how many holy Ordinances have ye seen and tasted there? and shall they all be unprofitable and vain? Is it not Pity you should wound and grieve the gracious God? How compassionate and loving is he to you! How ready, in his Compassions, to say, *How shall I give thee up, O Ephraim? How shall I relinquish my Interests in thee? How shall I deliver thee up, O Israel? how shall I resign thee into the Enemies Hands? My heart is turned within me: I can scarce bear the Thoughts of rejecting and renouncing thee. My Repentings are kindled together. My Bowels yearn over thee, I am ready to repent of the Evil I thought to do against thee, Hos. xi. 8.* Is God thus tender and compassionate? and is it not Pity you should grieve him and die? is it not Pity you should lose your Profession, and your Pretensions to Religion? Yea, that all your Professions should appear at last to be Hypocrisy, to be all Guile, and Deceit, as it must be, if you are lost, and perish at last? And how will you bear it, to have all your Show of Religion and all your Form of Godliness to be laid open at last, and laid naked before Angels and Men to be exposed as mere Cheat and stark Hypocrisy? Is it not Pity that all your Services in Religion should be lost? That all your Prayers and Devotions should be lost? that all your going to Church and hearing Sermons should be lost, and should do your souls no Good, for ever? that all your Charity and Kindness to the Poor should be lost and avail Nothing to your Salvation? that all your Labours, and Sorrows, and Sufferings in the Way of Religion, should signify Nothing at the great Day? O how sad it is you should be scorned, and reproached,

and reviled, for Religion, and yet at last it should appear that you had none, or none in good Earnest ! Pity it is you should lose your Hopes and Expectations ! How ready are you to say, *As I hope to be saved ! As I hope to go to Heaven !* as if you did not question but you shall be saved, and shall go to Heaven. And is it not a thousand Pities that you should lose your Hopes and Assurance ! and that at last you should not be saved, nor go to Heaven ! O what will you do when your Hope shall make you ashamed, and leave you confounded for ever ! Is it not Pity the Saviour of Life should be turned into a Saviour of Death unto your Souls ! and that the gracious Gospel of Christ should increase your Misery and Condemnation ? Is it not a thousand Pities that the Redeemer himself should be for your more dreadful Ruin and deeper Downfall ? that he shall fall upon you with all his Power, and Weight, and Wrath ? his Power is strong, his Wrath is great, and his Weight exceeding heavy. Woe to them on whom he falls. *On whomsoever he shall fall, he will grind them to Powder.* Is it not Pity that all your fair Progress, in the Way to Heaven, should be lost and come to Nothing ? It may be you have made a fair Beginning ; have begun to run well, and seem to start fair for Heaven and eternal Life : O what a thousand Pities it is you should fail of the Grace of God, and come short of Heaven at last ! It may be you have escaped the Corruptions that are in the World through Lust : It may be you have learnt many Virtues and Duties : are obedient to Parents, honest to all Men, fair in your Words and Promises, and far from coveting other Mens Goods and Possessions : Perhaps you can say, as the virtuous young Man did to the Lord, *All these Things have I kept from my Youth up.* And is it not ten thousand Pities now that all this should be lost for want of one thing more ? for want of Christ, and closing with him according to his Covenant and Gospel ? Is it not great Pity indeed that they that are not far from the Kingdom of God should at last lose the Sight of it, and never come there ? Is it not Pity that they that lack but one Thing, should miss that one Thing, the only Thing needful, and so never enter in-



to eternal Rest? O how sad it is that they, that are within one Step of Heaven, should miss that Step, and tumble down to Hell! O sad, that any of you, my Brethren, should be lifted up to Heaven in holy Favours and Privileges, and yet at last sink down to the bottomless Pit of Endless Death and Perdition! Is it not Pity that the Devil should run away with those that have been called the People of God, and have borne the Name of God in the World? Know ye not that Hypocrites and Unbelievers must be doomed at last to the Place and the World of the Devils! *Go, ye cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels!* And is it not ten thousand Pities, that they that have been baptized in the Name of the eternal God, have flocked together into the House of God, and been openly dedicated to God, should at last fall into the Devil's Hands, and be carried by him into his Dominions, and into eternal Flames? Is it not Pity that your Case should be worse, at last than if you had never been of the House of *Israel*? never been Members of the House of God? Is it not Pity that your Case should be worse than if you had been *Turks* or *Heathens*? O how much forer must your Judgment and Condemnation be! *It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you: More tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for you!* O dreadful! that your Condition should be more intolerable than that of *Sodom*! how unspeakably intolerable must it then be! Was there a more wicked, abominable Town on Earth than that of *Sodom*? Did any Town suffer more dreadful Judgments in this World than *Sodom* did? It met with a Hell upon Earth. It suffered somewhat like the Vengeance of eternal Fire. It was consumed by Fire that rained down out of Heaven upon it. If *Sodom* was punished with a Hell upon Earth, and if your Lot and Wee must be more intolerable than *Sodom's*, O what a hot, dreadful, inconceivable Hell, must you meet with at last, if in Hell you should lift up your Eyes! Do you not see then, it is ten thousand Pities that you of the House of *Israel*, you that live within the Church of God, should die and perish for ever? Why, then *will ye die, O House of Israel?*

O consider, and meditate the Extent and Importance of this Question? How many more are contained in the Bowels of it, or may be drawn suitable thereto! Many serious, weighty Questions may be asked you upon every Word of the Question of the Text; as, 1. Upon the Word *die*; relating to that Death and Misery that you are so willing to run into. 2 Upon the Word *ye*; relating to the People and Folk that are here supposed so willing to die. 3 Upon the Word *why*; inquiring into the strange Reasons that move you to be willing to die.

### I. *Questions on the Word die.*

(1) **C**ONSIDER what Questions may be proposed to you from the Word *die*; why will ye *die*? What is this *Death* that you are so ready to continue and bring upon yourselves? Do not such Questions as these thence arise for your most serious Meditations? *Why will ye die.* 1. Why will ye continue spiritually dead? Dead in your Guilt, and Trespasses, and Sin? Dead in your Ignorance, Unbelief, and Hardness of Heart? Dead to God, and to Religion, and all the Ways of God? Is there no such Thing as spiritual Life? no Inclination and Affection of the Soul to God, and Heaven, and Goodness? Is there no such Thing as Communion and Intercourse with God? What does the Gospel then signify, that professes to lead you to such high and heavenly Communion and Enjoyments? Is there no such Thing as a Conversation in Heaven? what mean then all the holy, heavenly Lives of God's Saints? Do they not declare, plainly, that they seek a better Country? that they have Hopes, and Hearts, and Joys, above? And will you be dead to all these? Dead to Christ, and the Heaven and Happiness of Saints? And will you be alive only to Sin and to the World? to the Lusts of the Flesh, and to the Pride of Life? O why will ye continue dead to all that is good!

2. Why will ye refuse the Author of Life, the living God, that gives Grace to his Saints, and Glory to the Blessed? His Spirit gives Life, the Light of his Countenance gives Light and Joy. With him there  
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is the Fountain of Life and Peace. Why do ye put Him thus to complain, *My People will have none of me?* none of my gracious, quickening Presence: They will not come to me that they may have Life. Why are ye unreconciled to the God of Life, and why will ye die, *O House of Israel?*

3. Why do ye reject and refuse the Way of Life? the good Way that will bring ye safely unto eternal Life? God has shewn you that Way. The Path of Life he hath made known to you. His Law is good, and leads to Life. His Commandments are everlasting Life. Holiness is spiritual Life, yea, it is eternal Life begun. Why do you hate that Life, and stand at a Distance from it? Why do you starve, and wound and ruin your Souls? And why will ye die, *O House of Israel?*

4. Why will you embitter your own Death? Your natural Death that is approaching apace? You cannot prevent it indeed, but you may make it more bitter and more dreadful. O what a terrible Death will you die, if you die in your Sins! a Death far unlike that of the Righteous! They go to Sleep; they die in Peace, and go to joyful Rest with God. But you die under the Curse and Wrath of God: Under the Hatred and Anger of God. O what Poison and Stings do you put into your Death! How ghastly and frightful will the King of Terrors look upon you! What Pains and Racks will be in your Consciences, when you are to leave the World! Is not Death of itself sad and grievous enough, but you will make it worse! O why will you choose the most terrible Passage out of the World? and why will ye die, *O House of Israel?*

5. Why will ye venture upon unspeakable, endless, Death? Ah! dear Souls! do you know what the Wages of Sin are? Do ye know what the Power and Wrath of an offended God are? Do you consider what it is to lie under the Weight of his Frowns, of his Terrors, and fiery Indignation, for ever? O that you may never know it by your own Sense and Experience! But are ye not running into those Flames? Are ye not destroying yourselves, and bringing Damnation on your own Souls? O pity yourselves! O hasten out of the Jaws of everlasting Death! *for why will ye die, O House of Israel?*

II. *Questions on the Word You.*

(2.) **C**ONSIDER what Enquiries arise from the Word *you*, in this sacred Expostulation. Questions relating to the People and Persons here supposed thus willing to die: Why will *you* die? *you*, that come under such Characters and Considerations as these?

1. You that are such noble, rational, Creatures, why will you die? You that are the Beauty and First-born of this World and Creation? You that are such Products of divine Power and Skill? How curiously and wonderfully are you framed and wrought! You may each of you say to the great God, *Thy Hands have made me and fashioned me: In thy Book were all my Members written*, when as yet none of them were drawn out and figured. Read the History of your Creation, and see if there is not good Reason to argue the Case with you. Why will you die? *God made Man (the Body of Man) out of the Dust of the Field*. A curious Body, you see, he has made it, composed of many curious Parts; fit for many curious Motions, Employs, and Exercises! fit to be the Companion and Habitation of a noble Soul. And will ye destroy so curious a Body? Is it not enough that it must dissolve, and lie rotting in the Grave for many Years? but would you also have it lie racked and tortured in Hell for evermore? God then breathed into Man the Breath of Life, a living Spirit: Whereupon he became a living, always living, or immortal, Soul. And should immortal Souls die and perish under the Wrath of God? You are knowing, rational Creatures, and will you die? You can understand what Death is, and can know how to escape it: You can foresee it, and fear it, and hasten from it. Let Brutes die, they know not what Death means: their Death is Nothing in Comparison with yours! Let wild Beasts and Cattle die, they were made to be taken and destroyed. *Are you not of much more Value than they?* They cannot make an Atonement for your Sin, cannot ransom your Souls, cannot be informed and instructed as you are: They know nothing of Life or Death, Nothing of Time and Eternity, Nothing of a future State and World; *He teacheth you*



*you more than the Beasts of the Earth, and maketh you wiser than the Fowls of Heaven, Job xxxv. 1.* He has made you for nobler Ends and Uses! and why then will you die? You are capable of immortal Life and Joy. Is not Immortality written upon our Natures? Upon your Minds, and Memories, and Consciences? Let those Things die, whose Spirits must go downwards; but why will you die, whose Spirits must go upwards, and must return to God who gave them?

2. You who are put into a Redeemer's Hand, why will you die? Know ye not that ye have been bought with a Price? that the Lord Jesus died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord of the Dead and of the Living? Is he your Lord? and is he the Lord of Life? and why will you die? has he brought you into his Hands, that he may prove and try you, and yet will ye die? Is he willing to respite the Curse of the Law, for a while? willing to try you with Patience, and Mercy, and Counsel, for a little Season? Does he set you in a State of new Trial and Probation, to see how you will act towards him, and how you will carry it for an endless Eternity? and have you resolved to abuse his Goodness, and to die at last? O poor Souls! shall a Redeemer do you no Good? shall a Mediator be lost, and all his Care and Love be forfeited? O you redeemed of the Lord, why will ye die?

3. You that have the Bible, the Book of God, to lead you unto Life, why will ye die? You that have the Words of Grace and Words of Life, why will ye forsake all and run into eternal Death? *What Advantage then hath the House of Israel above all other Nations and People? much every Way; chiefly that unto you are committed the Oracles of God.* He has not dealt so with other Lands and Countries. How many large Nations of the Earth sit in Darkness and in the Shadow of Death? Did you know how great a Part of this World is without the true Knowledge of God and Christ, surely you would pity those that dwell there; and surely you would be astonished at the strange Providence of God, and be provoked to improve and employ your Bibles and your Light much more. God seems to wink at their Ignorance, and to carry it to-  
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wards them as if he were not much concerned whether they live or not. But he deals not so with you ; he calls you into marvellous Light ; brings Life and Immortality to Light unto you ; gives you Leave to look into the Mystery of his Will, into the Mystery of redeeming Love ordained for your Glory. He gives you a Prospect into Heaven, into the most holy Place : Gives you Leave to see and contemplate the Things that Angels desire to look into. And shall the Living Oracles be in vain ? Shall the Spirit of Inspiration be given to the Church in vain ? O, you instructed enlightened Souls, why will ye die and perish for ever ?

4. You that have Life so frequently and frankly offered to you, why will you die ? eternal Life offered you by the God of Life ! Oh ! are not they justly reckoned willfully to die, that willfully refuse Life when it is set before them ? Can you say that Life, blessed Life, has not been offered to you ? will not your Conscience declare the contrary ? will not the Bible and your Ministers witness the contrary ? Is not eternal Life offered you in the Covenant of God, and together with the Son of God ? in the Covenant of God, which is a Covenant of Life and Peace to poor Sinners. Does not the God of Life there call to you, *Ho ! every one that thirsteth !* Ah ! poor indigent, dying Mortals ! you that want all spiritual, saving Blessings, *come you to the Waters :* Come to the Fountain of living Waters, to the Fountain of Life, and Grace, and Glory ! And *he that hath no Money*, no Merit or Worth of his own, *come buy and eat*, come and take freely ! come and receive, and embrace, the Blessings of Life and Peace : *Incline your Ear*, (be not still dead and obstinate ;) come to me, and *I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure Mercies of David*. I will covenant with you to give you the sure Mercies of *David*. And what are the sure Mercies of *David* ? Is there not Life among them for evermore ? How can ye despise the Covenant of God ? Is not the Son of God, and Life with him, offered unto you ? Doth not the eternal Father say, Here is my beloved Son ; hear him, receive him. There is Life in the Son. He that hath the Son, hath Life. Let him

him be yours, and all is yours; eternal Life, eternal Joy, eternal Bliss, and Glory are yours. O poor Souls! why will you die, to whom eternal Life is so freely and kindly offered!

5. You that have a Saviour standing and knocking at your Doors, why will you die? O what is the Mortal's Privilege in this Day of Grace? The Saviour waits, and calls, and knocks. O how few Nations have him so near, and so loudly knocking at their Doors, as you have! How kind is his Voice, and courteous his Carriage? Do you not hear him saying, *Open to me my Beloved. Open your Minds and Hearts to me, and I will come in and sup with you, and you with me.* And how richly will he entertain you with the Foretastes of glorious Life and Heaven! How frequent are his Messages of Love! how inviting are his Providences! how open are his Arms to embrace ye! How full are his Promises, and how strong his Importunities! And after all this will ye resolutely die, O House of Israel!

6. You that have a divine Spirit still striving with you, why will you die? A Spirit of Life in some Measure moving upon your Souls! Is he not still leading you unto God, and Religion, and holy Life! Does he not tell you, that now it is high Time to awake out of Sin and Slorb; and Time to look after Life and Eternity? Does he not put you upon repenting and turning unto God? Does he not tell you of your Sins, and convince ye of your Unrighteousness and Rebellion against God? Does he not tell ye, that he is ready to stand by you, and help you in all your Motions towards Heaven and eternal Life? Does he not sometimes give you good Thoughts and Intentions; good Desires and Resolutions? make you concur with the Word of God many Times, and make it good and sweet to you? and shall all these Works be lost? will you always grieve the Spirit of God? will you reject him, till you have quite quenched his Motions and Operations? O why will ye be so hardened against God and Goodness? and why will ye die, O House of Israel?

7. You that have the Ministry attending you to call ye unto Life, why will ye die? Let them die to whom

the Messengers of God are not sent, who are not allowed to behold the beautiful Face of them that bring the glad Tidings of Gospel Peace. But why should you die, to whom they come with Words of Life and Joy? They come to call you to Repentance, that you may live; come to call you to Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, that you may have Life by his Name; come to call you to Reconciliation with God, that you may live with God for ever. And will nothing of this do after all? will you wilfully die?

8. You that have the great God arguing the Case with ye, why will ye die? Do you know what it is to have the loving and living God pleading with you? He, that spake in Thunder, and Lightening, and Earthquake, to the ancient House of *Israel*, comes in a mild, compassionate Way, to plead with you. He might tell you, you shall die, whether you will or not: He might tell you, you should be lost and damned without Remedy! that it shall no longer be offered to your Choice, whether you shall live or not. But he pities you amidst your Sins and Follies, and condescends to reason with you, why will ye die? O what Condescension and Goodness are here! Will the eternal God stoop to argue and plead with the contemptible Dust and Ashes? Will he shew more Regard to our Welfare than we do ourselves? O how will ye answer him? what Reason will you give him why ye are so willing to die, and to be deprived of his Presence and Glory? Does he call you to live? Does he plead and intreat that you would be concerned for your Souls? and yet will ye die, *O House of Israel!*

9. You that live within the Compass of the Christian Church, why will ye die? You, whose Lot is fallen within the Church of God since the Redeemer came into the World? Of the two it was more tolerable that the ancient House of *Israel* should die than that you should. They that lived in the World, and in the House of God, before the Mediator was born, their Death might be more excusable than yours; they had not that open Light, and clear Discoveries of divine and heavenly Things, that you have. The Church  
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of God was then like an Heir under Age, deprived of many Privileges and Enjoyments you are admitted to. They were held under more Fear and Terror, under Types and Shadows, and dark Ceremonies, till the Time of Reformation. But, when the Messiah, the Mediator came, the Times of Reformation came also; Now more Light shines in the House of *Israel*; now Types and Shadows are fled away; now are ye allowed to behold the King in his Beauty, now ye see Jesus for the sufferings of Death made lower than Angels, but now crowned with Honour and Glory. You are called to take a large View of the Redeemer born into the World; conversing in all Goodness and Holiness among Men; confirming his Doctrine with mighty Miracles; laying down his Life for your Justification and Pardon; rising again from the Dead for his own Justification and yours! ascending into Heaven, taking his Place at the Right-hand of God, interceding with the Father for such as you, and designing to come again with all his Angels and Saints at the last Day. You are allowed to look more into the Counsels of God, into the Ark of the Covenant, into the Court of Heaven, and the Company and the Pleasures there. The Mytery, that has been hid from Ages and Generations, is made known to you, for the Joy of Faith and for Obedience of Faith. And yet will ye die? Will none of these Things lead ye unto Life? You that are under the New Testament, under the Reign and Kingdom of the ascending Redeemer, Why will ye die? you that are of the present *Israel* of God? Has not God provided some better Things for you, that they without you should not be made perfect? and yet, after all, will ye die for ever?

c. You that dwell in the purer Part of the House of *Israel*, why will you die? you that belong to *Judab* rather than apostatised *Israel*; you, whose Lot is graciously cast within the Pale of the reformed Churches! O how happy is your Portion there, unless you make it miserable by your Sin, and Sloth, and Folly! How great a Part of the Christian World lies in doleful Ignorance, Superstition and Idolatry! How many Kingdoms are enslaved to the Pope, and to the Errors and Abomi-

Abominations of Popery ! How little do they know of the Person and Mediation of the Lord Jesus ! How ready to set up other Mediators together with him ! and to fly to the Intercession of Saints ! How little are they instructed in the Merits and Fulness of his Death and Righteousness ! in the Sufficiency and Power of the Sacrifice by which he has for ever perfected them that are sanctified ! Alas ! how are poor Souls in those Lands, cheated with Masses and Latin Services ! with the pretended Merit of Saints, and Prayers for the Dead, and Stories of Purgatory ! and so are sadly led by the Blind, into the Ditch of Death and Destruction. And are they not enough to be deceived and die ? Will you perish as well as they ? You are brought into more Light ; you are allowed to see the Error and the Vanity, and Deceit of their Religion. And do not your Souls pity them ? And do you not seriously pray, that God's Kingdom may come among them ? If not, why do you pretend to be *Protestants* ? Is the Reformation no Blessing to you ? Is the Purity of the Scripture, and of heavenly Doctrine, no Mercy to you ? O carnal Hearts, if you can think so ! You are called to search the Scriptures themselves, and to see, with your own Eyes, the Way to Life : You are taught the Way of Forgiveness and Pardon through the *Blood* and *Redemption* of the Lord Jesus : You are taught the purer Worship of God, and yet will you die ? O how sad ! that *Protestants*, that Inhabitants in the reformed Churches, should lose Heaven and their Souls, and die for ever !

II. You that live in the Land of *Great Britain*, why will ye die ! that live in that happy Isle, that God has so loved and chose to bless ! O ! what has the good God not done for us ? How soon did he send his Gospel hither, and how long has he continued it, and by what wonderful Deliverances has he preserved it ! What mighty Works of Salvation have our Forefathers seen and declared to us ! What strange Revolutions and Acts of Divine Providence have we seen, and had Reason to admire ! How oft have our Lives, and all our Enjoyments, been endangered ! but God has secured them ! How oft have we escaped as Birds out of the Hand of the Fowler ! How few Campaigns  
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and Summers past, but we have abundant Reason to bless God for Deliverances, Successes, and Victories! and shall the good God thus shew that our Lives are dear to him, and shall we lose them at last? Shall he secure sacred Privileges for our Souls, and shall we lose them all? Shall he watch over us for Good, and shall we ruin all his Care and Watchfulness? O you indulged, saved, privileged, Inhabitants of this Island! why will you die?

12. You that read this Letter, why will you die? If it be not worth your reading, throw it by, and take a better Book. If it be worth reading, is it not so only because it calls you to consider what ye are doing, and whither you are going? And will you not consider? Have you resolved to go carelessly on, like a Beast to the Slaughter? Will nothing move ye? no Consideration awake ye? Will you read, and yet perish and die?

### III. *Questions on the Word Why.*

**T**HEN let us ask you a few other Questions, such as may arise from the third Word in the Text, *Why, will ye die?* Let me enquire into the Reasons of this Will, or Wilfulness, of yours. Have you any Reason to give the blessed God, who thus expostulates with you? Have you any Reason to give the Lord Jesus, when he shall come to judge the World, and when he shall ask you, *why would ye die?* and would not come to him that you might have Life? Have you any Reason for one that would ask you, in their Names, *why will ye die?* Let Conscience see and say whether these that follow are any of the Reasons why you will die and lose your Souls and Life for ever?

1. *Are you resolved that the blessed God shall have no Glory in your eternal Life and Salvation?* Are you such an Enemy to all his Glory, that you intend he shall have none in you and by you? Have you heard how well-pleasing it will be to him, to see you in Heaven? Have you heard and read what his Son, that came from Heaven, has told ye? That the Father rejoices when a poor Soul is returning thither; that he is ready to call all the Family together, and say to them, *It is*

*meet that we should rejoice and be glad: for, this your Brother was dead, and is alive, and was lost, and is found.* And are you resolved that you will not return to so loving a Father? that he shall have no Joy in you, no Comfort for your Salvation! Are you so fallen out with him, so unreconciled to him, that you have resolved he shall not be glorified in you? shall never see the Glory of his Wisdom, and Love, and Grace, in you? O ungodly Soul! will you die out of Envy and Spite, resolving that the God of Heaven shall have no Honour, no Glory, nor Praise, by you or by your Salvation.

2. *Have you resolved that the Redeemer shall have no Joy or Satisfaction in you?* Have you heard that the Father hath promised him a Seed to serve him? Have you heard that he is to see of the Travail of his Soul, and to be satisfied? But do you mean that he shall be disappointed in you? Do you resolve in you he shall not see the Travail of his Soul, and that in you he shall never be satisfied? Have you resolved that, as far as in you lies, you will spoil the Designs of his Death and ruin all the Fruits of his *Blood* and *bloody Sacrifice*? Is it not your Aim to do all you can that he should die in vain, and pour out his Soul an Offering for Sin in vain? Are you so displeased with him as to resolve that you will never sing the Song of *Moses* and the *Lamb*? that you will never give *Glory*, and *Honour*, and *Salvation*, and *Praise*, to him that was slain and redeemed you by his *Blood*? O cruel Souls! *Why will ye die?*

3. *Have you resolved that the holy Angels shall have no Joy in or by your Company?* Have you been told, by a Messenger from Heaven, that there is *Joy in the Presence of the Angels over one Sinner that repents and lives*? And have you resolved thereupon to blast their Hopes and spoil their Joy? Do you envy their present Happiness, and reckon they have so much that they shall have no more for you nor from you? Ah, poor Soul! what have they done to you, that you are so envious at their Bliss? wherein have they deserved your Illwill and Spleen? Are they not good enough for you, or fit to bear you Company? What is the Matter you are so lothe to let them have your Company and Conversation



versation in Heaven? Have they injured you, or done you any Wrong? What Fault do you find with the good Spirits, that you will not let them have that little Satisfaction and Solace that may arise from your Presence and Society? Why will you deny them so small a matter, or so great a Pleasure? and why will you miss of Heaven? and *why will ye die, O House of Israel?*

4. *Do ye design that the Devil and damned Spirits shall have your Company for evermore?* Are you more pleased with them than with the heavenly Society, and are you more willing to oblige and gratify them? What Service do you owe the infernal Spirits? Have you found their Company so good that you intend to have it for ever? Have you found their Service so pleasant, that you will oblige them with your Company in those fiery Mansions? What have they done for you? Have they helped you to some of the Pleasures of Sin? It may be they have; and will you therefore go and dwell with them in their Habitation? Have they helped you to some Trade and made you rich? It may be they have. There is a Deal of Trade carried on by the Devil's Counsel; and many are made rich by the Way that he purs them into. You know what he offered the Saviour himself. He shewed him the Kingdoms of the World and their Glories, and told him, *All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me*, Matt. iv. 9.

And has the Devil given you any of these Things? and will you therefore die that you may humour and gratify him? or have you made a Covenant with Death and an Agreement with Hell? Have you (as some poor Wretches are said to have done) entered into a Contract with the Devil to be his and to live with him? else what is the Master, and who has bewitched you that you should thus willfully run in the Way to eternal Death and Hell?

5. *Is it not enough in your Eyes that Angels have sinned and died, but you must die too?* They have died, as they are capable of dying, and as your Souls must die. They are cast out of their Mansions of Life and Glory! thrown out of the glorious, gracious, Presence of God! thrown out of holy, joyful, heavenly, Life! God spared

not the Angels that sinned, but cast them down to Hell, and delivered them unto Chains of Death and Darkness, to be reserved unto the Judgment of the great Day, 2 *Pet.* ii. 4. Angels are tumbled down into a second Death, *Rev.* xx. 14. And Death (all that were dead) and Hell (all that were in Hell) were cast into the Lake of Fire; that is, the second Death. And is not this enough for you? O how many were cast down! Millions and Legions of Angels, enough to fill the Earth; for, they are every where, in all Nations, seeking whom they may devour: enough to fill our Air, for they are the Powers of the Air, working in the Children of Disobedience. And are not these enough to suffer the Vengeance of eternal Fire! are not they enough without you? have you resolved to join yourselves with them? have you a Mind to bear them Company? are you willing to hear that dreadful Sentence, *Go ye cursed, into Everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*. If the Devil and his Angels are enough to go into that Fire, why will ye go there? and *why will ye die, O House of Israel?*

6. *Is it not enough that your first Parents died, but you must die?* Is it not enough that Death is brought upon you by Entail, but you must bring it upon yourselves also by your own Folly and Wilfulness? Know ye not, that, by one Man, Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin, and that Death passes upon all, forasmuch as all have sinned? But, alas! poor Mortals! is it not enough to have Death derived upon you from that one Man, even from old *Adam*, but will you voluntarily bring heavier Destruction upon yourselves? Will Nothing serve your Turn but a resolute pulling down of Death and Destruction upon your own Heads? Know ye not that God is now setting you upon a *new Foundation*? He now sets you upon *your own bottom*; he treats with your Persons, with your personal Understandings, Wills, and Hearts; he offers to you Life through his Son, the second *Adam*; and in the second Covenant, established upon better Promises. If you now die, you shall not die merely as one that sinned in *Adam* and fell with him in his first Transgression, but this will be your Condemnation, that Light

is come into the World, and Life is come into the World, and has been offered unto you, and you would not have it. And *will nothing serve your Turn, but a sorer Condemnation?* an aggravated Death? Have you resolved to die as Self-destroyers? and as wilfully accessory to your own Death? Why will you die; O *House of Israel?*

7. *Is it not enough that the old World died, but you must die too?* How long-lived was that World! How well stored with Inhabitants! How long-lived! Six or seven Hundred Years was an ordinary Life. How well filled? The Earth surely was replenished and abundantly. *The Earth was filled with Violence*, Gen. vi. 11. as if it were full of violent, bloody, Inhabitants. But what a violent Death rushed in upon them all? *God spared not the old World, but brought in the Flood upon the World of the Ungodly.* And Death came with the violent, irresistible, Waters; no Shelter or Refuge for poor Sinners in Houses, Courts, nor Castles; no Refuge in Woods, or on the highest Trees and Mountain-tops; no Refuge in Grotts, or Dens, or Caves of the Earth; Death sweeps down and washes away a whole World before it. And then how fast did Souls die as well as Bodies! Then Hell filled apace. It was a World of ungodly ones. And how many then went hence to lift up their Eyes in Hell! What Work was there for the Devil and his Angels, to receive such Throngs of Souls that came from this World of ours! O how vastly was the Dungeon of Hell filled all on a sudden! and what a Change was here, for Souls to launch out of the Water into the endless Flames! out of the rolling Waves into the Lake that burns for ever and ever! And were not these enough to die? Thousands and thousands then went down to the bottomless Pit! Was it not enough that a World thus died, but you must add yourselves to their Number, and you must die too?

Moreover, was it not enough that *Sodom and Gomorrah*, and other Cities of the Plain, died, and dreadfully died, but you must die too? Oh! what a dreadful Death was theirs! *God rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah Brimstone and Fire out of Heaven. And he overthrew those Cities, and all the Plain, and all the Inhabitants of*

*those Cities*, Gen. xix. 24, 25. And how many might those Inhabitants be? Probably Thousands and Thousands. And what a Death was theirs? A Hell on Earth, Fire and Brimstone rained upon them out of Heaven. This was just like the Vengeance of eternal Fire. And are not these enough in your Eyes to die, but you must encrease the Company and die too?

8. *Is it not enough that the Redeemer died, but that you must die too?* What! would you have the Surety die and the Debtor too? Oh! how painful, shameful, and grievous was his Death! and will not that serve your Turn? His Sorrows made him sigh, and groan, and pray, that if it were possible, that bitter Cup might pass from him! In his Sorrows he was heavy and fore amazed, and Sweat blood dropped down to the Ground. He was lashed and scourged in a cruel, bloody, Manner: He was nailed in his Hands and Feet to the Cross; his Side was lanced with a Spear to let out the Blood of his Heart; he bore the Curse of his Father's Law; he breathed out his Soul in lamenting after his Father's Light, and Favour, and Love; *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* And was not here Death enough for you? The Apostle reckons, that if one died for all, then were all dead! all as good as dead in him. And cannot you reckon so too? cannot you reckon yourselves crucified together with Christ? and now obliged to live together with Christ? and to seek that Life that is above, where Christ is at the Right-hand of God? Was it not enough then that the Mediator should die, but you must die too?

9. *Is it not enough that the old House of Israel should so generally die, but you must die also?* Alas! how few of the old Israel of God were willing to enter into Life? You find the Prophets of God complaining, *Who hath believed our Report?* You find the Prophet pleading, *Why will ye die, O House of Israel?* You find the Apostle complain, that *Israel* would not be gathered; that the *Jews*, the natural Branches, were broken off, through their Unbelief; that they were unwilling to accept of eternal Life; that they put the Word of God far from them, *so that Wrath was come upon them to the utmost*, and they were sealed up

unto



unto eternal Death and Wrath. And how many were they? Scattered into all Nations. And are they not enough to die? especially when added to all the Rest? Would you still increase the Number of the eternally dead? Oh! *Why will ye die, O House of Israel?*

10. *Are there not enough yet elsewhere to die, but you must die too?* Are there not enough in other Parts of the World? enough in heathen Lands to perish and be lost for ever? Oh! why are Christians so unconcerned about the poor blind Nations that have no Grace, no Gospel, no Saviour, sent to them? Oh! how great a Part of the World lies in heathenish Idolatry, and in the Shadow of Death! The Time of their Ignorance and Sin God winks at, and seems to deliver them up to their own Destruction. No Ambassadors are sent to them to entreat them to be reconciled to God; no Redeemer stands and knocks at their Doors as he does at yours: no divine Spirit strives with them as he does with you. O poor Souls! how mournfully has God forsaken them! do not your Bowels yearn over them? It is a Sign you have no great Love or Value for Christ or his Gospel, or else you would pity and lament the Condition of those that have them not. These are the greatest Part of the World. Are not these enough to perish and be lost for ever? Oh! why will ye add yourselves to their Number, and *why will ye die, O House of Israel?*

11. *Is the Number of the saved like to be so great, that you will be none of that Number?* Ah! foolish Professors! do you think that too many will get to Heaven? or that Heaven will be too full? There is Room enough for you: *Luke xiv. 22.* You heard indeed that there are Thousands and Thousands of Angels; that there is of redeemed Saints such a brave Company that no Man can number. But does this offend ye? Do you think the Multitude too great? Will you descend to the damned World in Expectation to find fewer? Alas! will few be saved? will the Righteous themselves scarcely be saved? and will you think those few too many? Why will you shut yourselves out of their Number? and *why will you eternally die?* Or,

12. *Are Heaven and Life so dreadful a State that you are resolved that you will not come there?* What! my Brethren, are you afraid of eternal Glory? Will Joy and Happiness do you any Harm? Will heavenly Blessings be your Grief, and Loss, and Torture? Is everlasting Light worse than everlasting Darkness? Is endless Life worse than endless Death? Do you hate and abhor the Face and Favour, and Loving-kindness, of God? Will that Presence and Glory be your Torture and Misery? Why then do you fly from Heaven? Why are ye, through Sin, and Sloth, and Carelessness, hastening unto eternal Destruction? *O why will ye die that are called unto eternal Glory by Christ Jesus?*

13. *Is Death and Hell so happy a State, that none but that will serve you then?* What shall I say to you, poor dear Souls? Are ye in Love with the Curse of God? can you cheerfully bear the Showers of his Wrath? the flaming Breath that goes out of his Nostrils? the sharp Arrows of the Almighty, when they shall stick in your Heart and Sides? Are howling, hideous Devils, such pleasant Company, that you have resolved to be with them for ever? How will you bear that astonishing Sentence, *Go, ye cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels!* Can ye cheerfully dwell in everlasting Fire, or contentedly lie down in everlasting Burnings? If you make a Mock at these Things now, do you think you shall do so when you are in the Midst of them? Do you think it will be as easy to find and feel those Tortures, as it is now to hear or read of them? Dost thou think thou shalt rejoice that thou art got thither? and that thou shalt never repent the Time or Day that thou didst drop down into the endless, furious, Flames?

14. *Is the Misery of those that die out of the heathen World so small, that you have resolved yours shall be greater than theirs?* Do you think the Damnation of poor Turks and Heathens is not sharp and severe enough? Have you a Mind to taste and feel more than they? They have not had indeed your Invitations and Calls; your Lights, and Helps, and Means. Do you think their Sins are not large enough, but yours shall be fuller and larger than theirs? Do you think their

Stripes.

Stripes and Lashes are not loud and keen enough, but yours shall be keener and deeper than theirs? Ah! poor Creatures! Are you desirous to be beaten with most Stripes? Would you make your Judgments and Torments greater than those of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*? greater than the Woes of *Tyre* and *Sidon*? Will nothing serve you but the hottest Place in the fiery Lake? the most raging Pains of Conscience, the sharpest Stings and Bites of that enraged Worm that never dies? Have you resolved to be turned into Hell, laden with Bibles, and Sermons, and Sabbaths, to make your Fall the lower there? Oh! what is the Matter that you prepare a Cup of severest Indignation and Revenge for yourselves? O poor Christians! will you die? How unspeakably sad and intolerable will your Death and Anguish be to all Eternity!

15. *Are you such Enemies to yourselves that you have resolved to die whatever comes of it! Have you sworn the Destruction of your own Souls and Bodies? Have you damned them so often that you are now unwilling to revoke the Sentence? Are you any of the vile Damnes of the World, that have over and over devoted your Souls unto Damnation, and are ye willing to die in your own repeated Curses? What are you implacably fallen out with yourselves! enraged at your own Beings? Are you grown so unnatural that you hate and abhor your own Flesh? and would fain see it raised from the Grave, and thrown into the fier Lake that flames for ever? O cruel, barbarous, Self-tormentors! why will ye die! O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself! Or,*

16. *Is it not enough to die once, but ye must die twice? Die the second and more dreadful Death! The first Death must come; you cannot prevent it; and how great will be its Work and Power! It will break the Frame of Man to pieces. It tramples the Body into the Dust, and will lay it rotting and mouldering there. It will spoil you of all your Beauty, and Strength, and Comeliness. It will make you Meat for Worms, and mingle you with the common Earth and Dust. And is not this enough? Will nothing but the second Death serve your Turn? Oh! consider how grievous that is.*

It is called *the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone*. That is the *second Death*, Rev xxi. 8. O what is more tormenting than Fire! what Fire more sharp and violent than that of Brimstone! And is this the Death you covet and choose? And will not the Wrath, the Fury, the Indignation, and Vengeance, of the Lord, be more sharp and severe upon the Soul, than Fire and Brimstone can be to the Body! and will none but the second Death serve your Turn? Or,

17. *Have you a Mind to try, by your own Experience, what this Death is!* what the Wages of Sin are, and the Penalty God has threatened? Are you not willing to believe us; and to believe the Word of God, and the Account and Description God has given you? Are you, like our first Parents, loth to go upon Trust? willing to know Good and Evil for yourselves? and so are ye desirous to be damned out of Curiosity? will ye go to the Regions of Hell and Darkness, to try how it is there? to see what they are doing and suffering there? Have you a mind to taste their Sorrows; to feel their Pains; to try whether the Report of that World and its Miseries are true? But, Oh! how will you return? Will you, for an Experiment and Trial, lie down in everlasting Burnings? Or are your Tortures so great already you want to know the worst and utmost of them? that has been the Case of some poor tormented Souls, such as *Francis Spira*, and some others. The Torments of their Minds and Consciences have been so intolerably great, that they have been ready to wish themselves in Hell, that they might know and feel the utmost of what they must endure. They could not bear the Thoughts of bearing more than they bore already. And therefore that they might be rid of Fears, they have wished themselves plunged into the real Damnation of Hell. Oh! astonishing Case! enough to make every Joint tremble to think of it! Is this your Condition? are you overwhelmed with such Agonies? why else do ye run in the Way to endless Death? and *why will ye die, O House of Israel?* Or,

18. *Are you willing that Death should reign and triumph over this World of ours?* So it must do, if the second Death prevail; if natural Death must carry away



away the Inhabitants of the World into eternal Death. But it is determined by Heaven that Death shall not so entirely reign. The Son of God is sent from Heaven to slay Death and conquer it: He has taken it for his Enemy, and he will reign till he has trod all Enemies under his Feet: *The last Enemy that shall be destroyed is Death.* He will come from Heaven to destroy it: He will come and open the Graves, and raise his Saints to Life, to glorious, endless, Life. And so Death to them shall be entirely destroyed and swallowed up in Victory. But are you loth it should be destroyed? loth that it should be abolished and conquered by the Lord Jesus? are you willing that it should reign still, and have the Dominion over you at the Resurrection of the Dead? Are you sworn Friends to *Death*? and have you made a Covenant with Hell? will you be Slaves and Captives of it for ever? Are you Enemies to the Power and Conquest of the Redeemer? do you intend that he shall not slay and vanquish *Death* for you? but that, in Site to him and his Glory, you will lie under the Power and Rage of Death for evermore? Or,

19. *Have you a Mind to defeat the Redeemer's Design & going to prepare Places above for such as you?* Is he gone to Heaven to prepare Places for poor Mortals? and have you resolved you will never come there? shall there be Room enough in the Regions of Life, and yet none for you? Shall the Redeemer be a *Fore-runner*? and have you resolved he shall not be a *Fore-runner* to you? and that because you will not follow him? do you maliciously intend to disappoint and frustrate all his glorious Designs in ascending into Heaven and sitting down at the right Hand of God? and appearing there in the Presence of God for you? Have you resolved he shall live in vain, and intercede in vain, and act in Heaven in vain, as to you? Have you resolved you will die, and will never come there? Or,

20. *Have you a Mind to glorify no other Attribute of God but his Wrath and Vengeance? will you fall a Sacrifice to his Power and Fury?* Oh! how strong and dreadful will that be! Who can dwell in everlasting Fire and Burnings! Do not you remember that the

Saviour

Saviour himself represents the proud rich Man in Hell, tormented in those Flames ! Oh ! the Power of divine Anger and Jealousy ! O the Vials of Wrath that will be poured out upon the Vessels of Wrath for evermore ! How wretched and miserable must they be, whom the living God will delight to punish for ever and ever ! Alas ! dear Souls ! have you a Mind to be made a Spectacle to Angels and all the glorified World ? a Spectacle of divine Fury, Indignation, and holy Revenge, throughout all the Ages of Eternity ? If you will thus die, there is no Remedy. Believing Hearts and Eyes must sigh and weep over you. Ye must in a little while lie down in a horrid sulphureous Lake, that burns and flames for ever and ever !

But for all your present Wilfulness, will you please, dear Souls, to think of these Things ! Is there a Door opened for your Entrance into endless Life, and will you not think of it ? Shall the eternal God ask ye the Reason why ye *will die*, and *will ye* not think of it ? Shall the good and kind Redeemer knock at your Door, and ask you to go along with him into *eternal Life*, and *will ye* not think of it ? Is this Life hastening to an End, and will ye not think of it ? Is Death approaching apace, and the Judge at the Door, and yet will ye not think of it or him ? Must ye in a few Days be either in *Heaven* or *Hell* ; among the *blessed* or *damned* ; and yet will ye not think of it ? *Well, farewell*, beloved Reader, and remember that thou hast met with a Letter that comes from one that would joyfully serve th Soul, and meet thee in Heaven. *Amen !*

FINIS.



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